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WILSON'S
TALES OF THE BORDERS,
AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE DOMESTIC GRIEFS OF GUSTAVUS M'IVER.

CHAPTER I.

GUSTAVUS'S ANTECEDENTS.

In a little house in the Canongate of Edinburgh, there lived, not very long ago, Mr Gustavus M'Iver—(for he never would allow himself to be called Ensign M'Iver, though that was his proper professional designation),—as good a man as ever God put breath in, and as faithful a soldier as ever Lord Wellington commanded in the Peninsula. That is, doubtless, no small praise to one conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity; and heaven knows if it were not as true as Jove's oath, it would never have been awarded by us. But he was remarkable in other respects than being honest; for he was six feet five without the aid of sock or buskin; and, if any man were to say that he was not four feet from acromion to acromion, he would assuredly be a big liar. But it is the head and face of a man that we like to look at; for, after all, what signifies (except in a warlike view, and ours is a peaceable one) a cart-load of mere bone and muscle, bound together with thick whangs of gristle, and yielding nothing but brute force, if it be not surmounted by a good microcosm of a head, with a good dial-plate to let a man know what is going on within. Do we not see every day great clocks put on the tops of big steeples, and yet, though they are nearer the sun than the little time-piece with the deuce a body at all, they go like an intermitting fever, telling us at one time that we are hurrying to the grave, and at another, that time has nothing to do with us at all. So is it with men; and, for our part, we could never discover any proper legitimate sympathetic accordance between the trunk and cranium of mortals, any more than if (like pins) they had been made in pieces and one head clapped on a body just as the occipital condyles suited the straps to which they are attached.

The opinion now expressed is well justified by the example of the subject of our story; for, while the big limbs of him seemed to set at defiance all regular laws of motion, either horizontal or perpendicular, going, as one might say without a paradox, wherever and however they choose, his head was as methodical as that of a drill sergeant, and the like of him for regularity might not be seen from Lerwick to Berwick. Nor was his face ever known to be at fault as a faithful indicator; and verily there was no great wonder in that, for nothing short of the pulleys he carried in his brain could ever have moved a single hair-breadth up or down, to the right or to the left, the big jaw-bone which he seldom condescended to impart any living motion to, except at meal times, or when (and that occurred very seldom) he had an idea to express sufficient in size and importance to warrant such an excess of labour.

We have said that Gustavus M'Iver had been in the Peninsula; and we may be believed or not, just as suits the reader's credulity with our credibility; but he was a luckless wight who dared to doubt that fact in the personal presence of the hero himself; better by far he had been at St Sebastian, for the never a one we ever heard of, that had the temerity to express any scepticism on the point that did not live to repent it. There can be no doubt, however, on the subject; for Gustavus was not only in the Peninsula, but he fought there very well; and no great thanks to him either, for he had the entire charge of the mess—a post of honour he had acquired from an indisputable superiority in culinary lore, and a most indefatigable perseverance as well as an unexampled adroitness in the art of carving both for himself and others. The praise he got for fighting was, in so far as regarded the immense heaps of hungry Frenchmen he hewed down with his falchion, true enough; the bulletin writer recorded the fact just as it was reported to him, that the great Goliath Gustavus did actually perform very wonderful feats of sheer killing; and we cannot help thinking, notwithstanding of the sneers of his brother officers, that it would not have become the dignity of a despatch to have made any allusion whatever to the manner in which he had kept up his body and his courage.

When the war was done, he came home filled with glory; and as, when the world speaks of a man, it is unnecessary for him to speak of himself, he seldom (for he was a sensible man) ever thought of speaking either of himself or any other person or thing. Conceit is the foundation of speech; where a man is filled to the very throat with glory, there is little occasion for him ever opening his mouth; and therefore it was that Gustavus, in addition to his other peculiarities, seldom deigned to hold converse with the creatures of the earth, unless it were in his capacity of paymaster of pensions (an office his prowess had secured to him), when he was compelled to speak, to make others hold their tongues—an operation in which he succeeded to a miracle, from the accumulated load of authority he derived from his silence.

CHAPTER II.

GUSTAVUS FALLS IN LOVE.

Now, it happened that this same Gustavus, after almost all the sap of his body had been eliminated by fighting, and there seemed to be scarcely enough left to lubricate the muscles that stretched from promontory to point of his big bones, like tough hausers, took it into his head to wish for a wife. We doubt if all the physiologists or psychologists that ever hunted for traces of the spirit among the white guts of the head could tell how such an idea came into such an extraordinary place; and if his heart was as dry as the voluntary muscles of his body, nothing short of a dislocation of Cupid's right arm could ever have sent into such a leathery organ the tickling shaft. True, however, it is as death, that Gustavus did actually fall in love, and the symptoms were just as extraordinary as the passion itself; for there never was heard in any man's lungs before, such a rattle of sighs; and as for the length of his jaws, the never a rough wood-cut of John Bunyan's hero in the Slough of Despond could come within many degrees of their lugubrious longitude. It is even true that the power of the tender passion reached to his stomach—a place of all others that might *a priori* have been considered perfectly independent of all moral impulses whatsomever. Nothing before, except hunger itself, had ever affected that organ; and, indeed, ensconced behind and between, and beneath such ribs, nothing short of death itself might have been supposed capable of reaching it, or subduing its tough hide, its viscous linings, and its gastric juice, stronger than the best gin that ever was made at Schiedam.

Now the *petit bel chose* that had thus produced such an effect upon the moral and physical economy of this big son of

Mars, was no other than a mere toy of a thing—a little milliner called Julia Briggs—scarcely so big, when divested of the padding and stuffing with which her art enabled her to supply her deficiency of natural size, as one of his huge limbs. But this may be no manner of marvel to those who are versant in the mysteries of love, who, being himself a small creature, seems to delight in throwing into the smallest of his victims the greatest portion of his power. It is difficult to see philosophically any final cause in the curious fact in nature; but surely, the never a man, who has any observation in him, will deny, that pigmy beauties and colossal swains (and *vice versa*) have a singular power of producing in each other the tender passion. It may be owing to nature's love of the *juste milieu*, that thus induces her to take this mode of keeping up a reasonable *mean size* among human creatures, or it may be any one of a thousand other speculations; but what care we for such theories, when we have the fact to state as an undoubted truth, that Gustavus fell in love with Julia Briggs, as standing like a mighty Anak, in the Canongate of Edinburgh, he saw the little creature skipping along, twisting her little limbs as if she would have dislocated her joints in her efforts to appear graceful, in the eyes of mankind generally, and in those of the gigantic Gustavus, whom she had often seen looking after her, in particular! Successful beyond any prior example of her wriggling evolution of her graces, the little baggage—as quick in her eye as ever were Pip, Trip, or Skip, the maids of honour (according to Drayton) of Queen Mab—saw at once that she had hit the proper twirl and twinkle, at last, that would subdue the involuntary muscle that had so long been useless beneath the ribs of the great Gustavus. The moment the effect was produced, the sinews of his body began to move, and away he stalked after her, with strides as long as the whole height *a capite ad calcem* of the quarry upon which he intended to pounce. It spoke well of the power of "her harness of gossamer," that it stood the tug of so huge a victim; and, as she turned her twinkling eye to observe the triumph of her power, she did not fail to rivet the chains by some higher displays of graceful contortion, that made his eyeballs roll in the large sockets, as if he had seen a hobgoblin, in place of Julia Briggs, the *petite marchande de modes.*

This was just as good a beginning as ever a sly man-catcher essayed in the world of love, since the days of Helen; and the arch kidnapper knew very well how to follow up her wile; for, after displaying, by a proper caper, as much of her ancle as would do the business, she skipped away, as nimbly as Nymphidia in the service of Oberon's queen, and was not again seen till she opened the window of her mother's house, and displayed herself, capless and coifless, to her staring admirer. The capture was now completed. Jove himself was never more completely entoiled by the chains of the little baggage Iynge; and, during the whole of that day, Gustavus strode along the pavement, opposite the window of his charmer, as if he had been on duty before a besieged city. He had just as little power to walk away as he had to circumscribe his step to the ordinary measure of God's creatures; every stride occupying, at least, four feet of pavement, and being executed so regularly and methodically, that one step did not differ from another by a single inch. But it is a mere bagatelle to describe these pendulous movements, produced, for the first time, by the spirit of love; while, to execute with truth a faithful picture of the painful contortions of a countenance originally formed a wood-cut of extraordinary dimensions, and now under the soft, melting influence of the tenderest of passions, would require a goose-quill, owning no less an influence than the spirit of an immortal genius. As the loves of some of the inferior animals are expressed by sounds and signs that seem to indicate nothing but fierce war, so might the demonstrations of this extraordinary affair of the heart, exhibited through the grotesque motions of muscles that had been as rigid as dried leather for twenty years, be looked upon as anything rather than signs of the languishing passion which, as Augustin says, will make a musician out of an ass. Yet, doubtless, there was, both in his goggle-eyes and lengthened face, an expression that was intended for softness and languishment; and it is not impossible, that, if one had been apprized *a priori* of the intention, he might have discovered in the ludicrous gesticulations some resemblance to at least a burlesque of what is only a very ridiculous exhibition at the very best.

Love that is long a-coming, comes at last with a terrible onset—overturning all sense and prudence, kicking up the heels of all forms of etiquette, and removing every impediment to its progress. It is but a very small matter to say, that Gustavus could not sleep under the hug or embrace of the new customer that had taken such a violent hold of his heart, though we do not deem it an equally insignificant announcement, that a man who could swallow a couple of pounds of flesh at a down-sitting, should lose his gustative and digestive powers to such an extent that the knocking of his heart sounded audibly through his empty stomach, as if it had been a whispering gallery. But love is a leveller in more senses than the vulgar one; and the only circumstance about the matter of this particular case at all remarkable, was, that such effects, upon a body iron-bound as it was, and of such gigantic proportions, should have been produced by an agent of such truly insignificant dimensions. A resolute disciplinarian, however, at all points, without a single qualm of fear or doubt, and accustomed to attack a city or a haunch of beef with equal *sang froid*, the love-smitten victim, on the third day after his seizure, drew up his huge limbs to their full extent, till he seemed like the

Colossus of Rhodes, and settled the whole affair by one resolute gnash of his under maxillary bone. Two strides took him to the door, one or two more brought him down stairs to the street, and the never a man that stalked off ground that was to be his own, went along with such strides as he used in making his way to the house of Julia Briggs. With one solitary idea in his head, and one word on his tongue—though there was room for a thousand—he went direct up to the door, knocked, like one of Froissard's warriors at the barricades, was admitted, turned off the momentous question of marriage by one heavy lurch of his jaw, and settled a matter that danglers take years about in the space of time that a thirsty Bacchanalian would occupy in taking a long pull of jolly good ale.

CHAPTER III.

GUSTAVUS IS MARRIED.

In the week afterwards, the couple were united in the holy bands of matrimony; and, surely, to say that there was any ceremony about such a union, would be a burlesque of the mysteries of Hymen. Yet, rapid as were the movements, and wholesale the conclusion, no man ever put his neck in the noose with such imperturbable gravity, for, during the whole period occupied by the feast, which was in the form of a supper, no man could have observed in his gaunt face any one of the three laughs, Ionic, Megaric, or Sardonic, with which the face is usually convulsed; the only indication approaching to a cachination in the midst of the whoops and yells of the feasters, being a grin in the shape of a *risus Ajacis,* that defied all power of analysis. But even this caricature of a display of good humour, insignificant as it may seem, shewed to those who knew the man that he was labouring under the influence of some extraordinary emotion, as nothing of the kind had ever been seen in his countenance since the day on which he hewed down so unmercifully the French at St Sebastian. Nor, on the following day, when he had fairly entered upon the supreme happiness of the married state, was there seen any palpable sign of the joy that, of course, penetrated through all his well-mailed thoracic viscera—unless it were, perhaps, that his face had even increased in length, and the leathery aspect of all the "celestial index" of the soul was, if possible, more grim than ever.

The getting of a wife is, after all, but a very small matter in comparison of the ruling of her; and sure, if ever there was a man in the world, since the days of the grim Hercules, who bungled the matter out and out, that had any chance of subjecting his wife to the requisite thraldom and subordination, Gustavus was that man; for a look of him was enough to tame a Bucephalus any day; and it was evident that he cogitated mighty achievements in that way, if one might have judged from the marshalling character of his step as he paraded the house; his taciturnity, deeper than the wells of truth; and the air of a resolute importance that was enthroned among the deep furrows of his extraordinary countenance. The first fruits of his study—and verily he must have been a man of no common nerve that could study during the honeymoon—was the important conclusion, that the sooner his Julia was entoiled in the multifarious affairs of domestic economy, and the imperative duties of ministering to his every want and comfort, the better chance he enjoyed of subjecting her thoroughly to the power of his stern discipline. So straight began he, accordingly, upon the instant, and, by the aid of a small douceur, got quit of his servant—an act that savoured of extraordinary sagacity and wisdom, in so much as it involved the additional advantages of saving her wages, and keeping and turning his wife into a source of profit, as she would doubtless be the fountain of much delectation. It is not unlikely that the maxim, when the devil finds a man or woman idle, he straightway sets them aworking—or, as Erasmus expresses it, *Ocium ad omnem nequitiam impellit*—had a large share in this determination; for, as to the opinion of Shakspeare, that idleness is the source of love, he despised it hepatically, and calculated with certainty that love's sweetest labour—the contributing to the comfort of her lord—would be diligently pursued by his beloved and most adorable Julia Briggs.

All this was just as fair a piece of human calculation, and as probable a conclusion, as could ever be found beyond the regions of pure mathematics; and so, placing every fibre of his big body, excepting some portion of the heart, under the rigid authority of the genius of command, he issued, with an air a deuced deal more martial than marital, his stern orders, which were as recondite as they were energetic—going into the very medullary *penetralia* of the matter of cooking and housekeeping with a knowledge and consideration that would have done honour to Mrs Margaret Dods of the Cleikum Inn herself. Nor was this to be much wondered at; for, had he himself not washed and dressed in the Peninsula, and had he not there also foraged, and cooked, and swallowed as no *bon vivan* ever did before, since the days of the three Apicii? The never a man had ever doubted it; and if he had, it would just have been as safe for the unhappy wretch to have disputed his courage as to have expressed one word of scepticism on a subject that so nearly concerned his honour—for, in either case, he would have been knocked down.

It would be a libel on womankind to say, that the *polite* Julia, who had been a standing toast among the small men of fashion connected with the depots of millinery wares about the town, had any affection for the bare-boned Colossus she had wedded on a week's notice; and it would have been an insult to her spirit to have said that she feared him, though he was at least three times the size of any of her former lovers. She had married him, as all women of her stamp do, just for a living and protection—the one to be afforded from his pay, and the other from his bones and sinews—a very fair calculation for a woman of so small a calibre to make; and, accordingly, she would have declared war against him at once, big and terrible as he was, if she could have seen any good to come of it; for, as to the fearful expression of his leather-bound jaws, when he issued the order for work, she cared no more for it than if it had been a smile of mawkish love-doting. It is not likely that she had ever heard of Omphale, who ruled the biggest man of the world by her slipper; but she had not thrown away the needle, which had been used on the linens of fair, personable men, to take it up again to sew for a husband that never was intended by nature to be loved; and, as for supplying its place with the spit, she looked upon the proposition with as much contempt as she would have bestowed on a proposal that she should love the gigantic caricature she had married for nothing else in the world but her own convenience. All that was as plain as noon-day; but open war was not her tact, any more than it is the tact of Puck to fight the regular Goliaths of the earth at a fair stand-up or monomachy; and it is scarcely necessary to say, that the open *duellum* is no more relished by the women of her class generally, than it was by the "eel or deil" of a creature that Gustavus had raised to the high station of his wife. Nor had she any difficulty in fixing on her plans; for nature was just as kind to her as to the rest of her sex in suggesting the means of perplexing her lord, though it is not improbable that, if she had known that his intention in making her work was to keep her out of all that species of devilry that comes to women out of idleness, she might have been inclined to vindicate the nobility of her kind, by some more devilish trick than mere unaided nature might at first have prompted.

The sharp, vixen eye of the pigmy sempstress had not been slow in perceiving that the two grand *sine quibus non* of her husband's comfort, were pure linens and well-cooked victuals; and she knew, moreover—doubtless in the way by which the sex come to their secret knowledge of men's ways—that he had been in the habit of securing these grand objects by the labour of his own hands. The antipodes of each other in everything, they were as unlike each other in respect of these domestic duties, as they were in the sizes of their bodies; for while, as has been already hinted, there never was a man since the days of Pope Joan that excelled more in the mysteries of washing, dressing, and cooking than Gustavus, there never was a woman that knew less of these recondite arts than Mrs Julia M'Iver. The sexes of the two should, therefore, clearly have been reversed—he should have been the wife, and she the husband; and Julia knew this just as well as we or any other individual who presumes to question the excellence of the laws that regulate matrimonial matches, when she resolved to bring about a state of matters that would just be the same as if the potentiality we have mentioned had just in fact been a reality. She accordingly began by spoiling every piece of domestic labour to which she applied her hands; his linens being as much of the tint of saffron as ever were those of a gareteer, who enjoys the luxury of a pole and rope put forth from a skylight; and his victuals as wretchedly dressed as ever a devil-sent cook in the kingdom could have mangled out of the fair gifts of nature. Nothing in the way of destruction could have been more skilfully managed; and it is not too much to say, that, though the fair Julia had lifted her delicate hand, and attempted to knock him down, or performed any of the other *culpæ gravissimæ* that appertain to the privileges of the sex, she could not have more effectually roused the wrath of the mighty Gustavus.

CHAPTER IV.

GASTAVUS BECOMES HOUSEWIFE—AND JULIA UNDERGOES A CHANGE.

HAD Gustavus been a reasonable man, he might have begun supplying, in a rational way, the deficiency of domestic lore which his Julia thus lamentably discovered; but, unfortunately, his pride of the perfectibility of his own knowledge of these occult mysteries was called in question at the very time that his anger was roused by a fault the most heinous of any beyond the pale of the decalogue. With a look of terrible scorn, in which all the gristly muscles of his grim face were called into a grotesque, convulsive motion, he announced, in as much of a paucity of vocables, and as loud a sound as ever the stentorian Cycloborus, expressed his settled determination to take the sovereignty of the kitchen on his own shoulders; and no one could have heard the sound and seen his countenance without believing that it was just as sure as death or sin that he would do as he said he would do. At least, there can be no manner of doubt that Mrs Julia M'Iver believed him, and it was equally doubtless that she did not fear him. She smiled at the success of her scheme, and the smile itself would have done the business of confirmations, if there had been any need of such aid in the matter. So, accordingly, the apparition was soon afterwards exhibited, of the great bibbed Gustavus striding about in the kitchen, and performing *manibus suis* all the operations of the culinary department of his domestic economy; and we would tell a big untruth, or be guilty of misprision itself, if we attempted to conceal the fact, that he washed and dressed his own linens as well as, if not a deuced deal better, than any washerwoman that ever danced in a trough in the village of Duddingstone.

When Hercules laid down his club, and took off his lion's skin, and received from the hands of his mistress the spindle and distaff, the big warrior did no more than many a better man has done when he resigns himself to the dominion of love; but no love on earth would ever have made Gustavus M'Iver take upon himself the duties of a woman. He did it from a sheer love of good eating and clean linens—ay, and he persevered in it too, though he saw, as plain as palpable physics, that (what he dreaded) his *petite* Julia would become a prey to the harpies of indolence. And, to be sure, the ordinary consequences very soon began to shew themselves; for where there was no love and no work to occupy the mind, and plenty of well-dressed victuals to fill the stomach, Mrs M'Iver was, in every respect, a lady at large, and, a lady at large being synonymous with a lady in danger, she fell into habits of going abroad, and calling, and gossiping, and sipping, and tasting, till she became as big a drunkard as ever was seen out of the county town of Horrestia. Yet, still true to her character, she feared Gustavus nothing—no more than she did the good whisky which she swallowed in choppins; and this fortitude made the mischief ten times greater than it would otherwise have been; for, terror being the fulcrum of law and amendment, there might have been some hope of her if she had not ensconced herself behind the noblest of all the cardinal virtues—true blue courage. Though a *petite marchande de modes,* and unable or unwilling to cook a dinner or dress a shirt, Mrs Julia M'Iver knew the rights of her sex just as well as the "guid wife of Auchtermuchty" herself—she knew that Gustavus had no right to turn her away without supporting her, and he could not beat her without subjecting himself to the horn of a summons of separation and aliment; so, upon the whole, she had grounds for her fearlessness, which would have supported her though she had had never a particle of true heroism from the mother of every one of us.

Few women whom fame has immortalized, have done so much as was achieved by this little heroine; for she had already made a giant her cook and servant, and now she forced him to become her nurse, when she chose to be sick from the effects of intemperance. A more complete reversal of all the reciprocal duties of husband and wife, had never been achieved by woman; and it was in vain that Gustavus looked more grim and gaunt than ever—that he even condescended to *argue* upon the subject—a thing he had never before done in his life, and of which, in truth, he was deemed totally incapable. He still loved the wicked imp, and she knew he loved her—and what more was required to account for the fearless perverseness on the one side, and the submission on the other? But what was he now to do? It was comparatively mere pastime to cook or to wash, or even to nurse the sick Julia, when her illness overcame his resentment; but the thought that the grand qualities and faculties of a man who had commanded and killed in his day, and whose very look spread terror around him, were to be brought down to subserve the mere purpose of ministering to one of the smallest of women that ever drew breath, and one of the greatest drunkards that ever drank whisky, was surely enough to make an ordinary man mad. If the difficulty was to be resolved at all, it could be only by cogitation; and so straightway he set about a process of thinking—an operation of marvellous difficulty to him, as might have been manifestly seen by the length of his stride and of his face, as he paced backwards and forwards—his apron, a species of mail he donned every morning before he began his operations, shaking and rattling among his huge limbs like a mainsail in a gale of wind.

And, to be sure, his was not altogether a barren cogitation, as might have been both seen and heard in the loud thunder of his hand on the table, as he muttered his resolution to stop the supplies. He never failed to act upon a thought; for the thing was too difficult to be got, to be lost for want of use, and, accordingly, the supplies were stopped; but what was that to Julia Briggs, so long as he had any credit in the town, or she had any clothes on her back? Julia got intoxicated as regularly as ever she had done before, and demanded imperiously his ministrations as nurse, with the same *sang froid*, or rather pertness, that formed a part of her cardinal courage. His cogitations had gone for nothing; and again the painful duty of pondering and devising, was forced upon the thick intestines of his gigantic head.

Again he perambulated the house from room to kitchen, sometimes brandishing like a sword a spit or skewer, in the mental absence produced by the effort to think; and he caught at last—what he laboured for—a cure for Julia's habits of drinking; and he acted upon it again as manfully as before; for he locked her up, and the devil a chum, or gossip, or pot-companion could approach her; but he forgot that there was such an aperture as a window in a house, or a mouth in a woman, and the first thing that assailed his ears was the cry of Julia for constables to give her the liberty that our great country has awarded as a boon to all natural-born subjects of the realm. Nor was so just an appeal vain; for authorities and neighbours interfered in behalf of the prisoner; and Gustavus was told to his teeth that he had not a jot of right to imprison his wife; whereupon she was released, and the evening of the same day saw her, under the effects of the jubilee of her emancipation, more intoxicated than he had yet ever beheld her.

Again was the rusty machinery of his intellect set in motion, and the result was a device that distanced the former experiments, as well for its ingenuity as its chance of success. He had heard of women being *satiated* with liquor; and so he put in her power ten times more than ever it was in the capability of woman to swallow—an act that was accompanied by something in the shape of an argument, to the effect that, if she became disgusted with it, she would give it up, and if she died of it, the consequence would be the same. The result in the one case would be an achievement that would bring him comparative happiness, and the consequence in the other would, he was now satisfied, (such was the misery he had suffered, and was still suffering,) be anything but a misfortune. But Julia took no more than was good for her, and thanked Gustavus heartily for his extreme kindness, while every day she applied herself to the big measure; and every night, while the supply lasted, went to bed with the assistance of Gustavus' own hands.

CHAPTER V.

GUSTAVUS FALLS UPON ANOTHER INGENIOUS DEVICE.

THUS did matters continue for a long period of time; and all the efforts, and threats, and devices of Gustavus had no more effect in preventing Julia from taking her pleasure, than the restraint of a husband generally has over the irregularities of a wife of true courage, who knows her inalienable rights derived from the just laws of a free land. If his brain seemed to be exhausted in devising remedies, his patience fell a victim before his continued wretchedness —and no marvel either, when it is considered that while other men only bring in the means of supporting a drunken wife, whom the equitable and wise ordinances of the country will not allow him to get quit of except for a crime not a tithe so bad as that of Julia M'Iver, he kept her in means, and cooked for and dressed for her, and nursed her, and all the good he got out of her was the liberty of doing these things for her benefit. By a happy chance, however, Gustavus' brains were not yet exhausted. Space and time he had taken to ruminate upon his evils, and to hit upon one expedient more for the envied cure; and he resolved to carry his Julia off to the country, where, in some secluded cottage, he might exercise such an authority over her as would prevent her from following her usual courses. So accordingly he did just as he had resolved; and, in a small domicile in a part of the north, he took up his habitation, for no other purpose in the world than to cure Julia of her heart-engrained propensity. The place he had chosen seemed the very choicest that could have been found in all Scotland—ay, or England or Ireland either; for there was no house where a gossip might live, or a whisky-vender hang board, for miles; while a carrier that passed daily brought him everything that was necessary for human sustenance; and he himself could cook and wash unseen by the eyes of mortal.

For six weeks was Julia M'Iver as sober as the Chief Justice of England, or the President of the Supreme Court, and it was manifest that the never a drop of anything stronger than river water had got beyond her parched lips.

Now, Gustavus triumphed as no man ever triumphed under less than an ovation itself; and Julia was forced to be contented with the limited tyranny of making him continue his domestic duties; for the more sober she was kept, the less she would do, and her time was chiefly occupied in reading novels, which Gustavus was glad to give her as an inadequate surrogation for whisky. But all this was too good to last, though how it should be interrupted, no man with less than the spirit of one *Davo versatior* could possibly tell. Jove's greatness is, however, no less true, than the fact that

Gustavus came in one night and found, and staggered with perfect amazement as he found, Mrs Julia M'Iver lying on the floor, more perfectly obnubilated, speechless, and senseless, from the effects of the liquid enemy, than he had ever seen her in his life. Yet there was no one near; the carrier had not called for a week; she could not have been absent from the house for more than half-an-hour; and he himself had been out stalking for exercise, and rejoicing in his triumph for no more than three full quarters. The matter seemed a mystery as deep as any that ever was covered by the Eleusinian veil; and having put her to bed, as he had done a thousand times before, he set about an investigation and search through all the premises, which ended in a look of gaunt amazement, and an ineffectual striding backwards and forwards, till he threw himself on a seat, and gave up the task in despair. Nor, after he had nursed her into sobriety, could he make a jot more of the inexplicable subject; for Julia had too much good sense to tell where she got the treasure, and only smiled at him as his heavy lips twisted themselves into a question, where, in the name of the author of all evil himself, she had fallen upon that infernal element.

No light was to be thrown upon the subject from any of the quarters from which evidence could have been looked for, and the circumstance might have remained as one of those mystical wonders that have perplexed mankind from the beginning of the world, and been passed over in despair, if Julia had afterwards remained sober, but she had scarcely recovered, and Gustavus had only begun to hope once more, when she was found again in the same state; and, every two days, or at farthest three, she repeated the habit, till at last she was as bad, if not worse, than she had ever been in the midst of dram shops in the city of Edinburgh. Never a word of explanation would she give on the subject; the carrier was watched, and found to deposit nothing; the inhabitants at the distance of miles were interrogated in vain; the house was again searched—no one had been seen to call, and all was as obscure as the numbers of Pythagoras, the Bæotic enigma, or the poems of Carcinus; the deuce a beam of light could Gustavus get for love or money, to clear up the dark mystery.

CHAPTER VI.

GUSTAVUS IS MYSTIFIED, AND RESOLVES ON A SCHEME PERFECTLY ORIGINAL.

He had now retreated from a bad position to one a mighty deal worse; for, in the midst of a town, he could sometimes see a friend, and smoke a pipe, in the fumes of which all his cares were, for a time, enveloped, and kept from the eyes of his haunted fancy; but now, in the midst of a comparative wilderness, he had no associate, but that very limb of Satan herself, that was the source and origin of the misery to which he was enslaved. He was, besides, rolled up in a cloud of mystery, in which the wicked enchantress sat and mocked him, like some of those eastern genii, that love to look and speak through thick vapours which increase the mystic character of their power. Still she contrived to get intoxicated; and, so vain had been his efforts to trace the source of the evil, that he verily believed the imp was possessed of some charm whereby she realized a compact with the enemy of mankind. If he went out to stalk round the house and brood over his misfortunes, he found that she had, in the meantime, got herself made perfect in insensibility; and if she, by any means, got to a short distance from the house unobserved, she returned in a condition no less lamentable. It was a big, crying evil, fronted with shame, and adminicled with devilries of every degree and colour that ever came from the box of Pandora. It was impossible that man could stand it; and necessity, the mother of invention, stung the obtuse brain of Gustavus to something like the *ingenium perfervidum* of genius itself. He knew very well that he had terrified men; and, indeed, as love is said to be inspired by a look, so one glance of him was, of a surety, sufficient to have produced fear in any one but Julia, who valued his fierce looks no more than if they had been smiles. But he could do more than look—he could threaten; and the question that troubled him, for a time, was, what he should threaten; for he had made up his mind to terrify her in some way; and the sheer necessity of projecting something worthy of himself, was the parent of one of the most extraordinary expedients that ever came from the brain of genius.

The expedient was this: He told her, with a big oath, and a face at which the walls of St Sebastian might have trembled to their foundations, that, the first time he found her intoxicated, he would put her in a coffin, and actually bury her in the earth, as deep and sure as ever Jonah was buried in the belly of the biggest monster of the deep. Nor was the threat a sheer gust of breath, for he immediately set about making a real coffin—a performance which he executed very well, painting it as black as fashion requires, and studding it with a goodly portion of white buttons, which he tore from a mass of old regimentals; and, having finished it, he placed it in his bedroom, as a grim indication of the reality of his intentions. But the woman who could defy the terrors of such a face as that of Gustavus M'Iver, had nothing to fear from the sight of a coffin; and so, of a surety, it turned out—for the determined baggage not only laughed broad in his countenance, but told him to it, that, so long as he was cowardly enough to have any fear of the gallows, she had not a jot of reason to be afraid of being buried alive.

Both parties, in this way, seemed equally determined. Gustavus took his usual mighty strides along the room, and set the pulleys of his facial muscles in rapid play; and Julia, the pert minx, indulged in her laughing mockery, that seemed to set him and his coffin at defiance. That she was as serious as Socrates in her disbelief of his intentions, was very soon made manifest—for the coffin had not been three days old, when she got as drunk as Midas; and that he was apparently as determined as Draed, he very soon gave suitable demonstrations—for, in place of lifting her into bed according to his usual practice, he placed her into the grim chest, and, putting a mattock on the top of it, he hoisted it on his shoulders, and strode away forth to a wood as dark as the recesses of the Cumæan witch, that stood at some distance from his habitation. There, as good fortune would have it, he found, already dug to his hand, a deep hole, round the edges of which grew a profusion of bushes and furze, sufficient to make the pit as grim and frightful as the very grave itself; and there, having deposited his charge, with plenty of room for breath through the holes he had made in the lid, he turned him round, and stalked away home to cook his dinner.

CHAPTER VII.

JULIA GETS INTO A PLEASANT PANDEMONIUM.

Now, it happened that honest Angus M'Guire and Donald M'Nair, two brawny Highlanders, were that day busily occupied in distilling a drop of good whisky, in a subterraneous distillery, to which the hole wherein Gustavus had laid his wife, led by a covered and concealed passage; and it was in no other than this very place that Julia had been so plentifully supplied with the liquor by which she was so often inebriated. Sitting by the mouth of the worm or serpent, which gave forth drop by drop the poison, stronger and more hurtful than ever came from the mouth of the Snake of Lerna, they heard a strange noise on the ground over their heads, as Gustavus was busy about the details of his interment, and shook with unfeigned terror, as if they had been on the point of being discovered in their illicit operations. By and by they heard a rumbling in the mouth of the cavern, as if some one had been in the act of descending, and, rising and seizing each a pistol and a sword, they stood on the defensive, prepared to slay the first gauger that should set his face into their subterraneous dominions. But the never an exciseman appeared: in place of that, to them, most fearful of all mortal beings, they saw the identical coffin in which Julia M'Iver had been laid, fall with a heavy sound upon the floor of their dark habitation.

Terror-struck, twenty times more than if they had seen the ghost of a murdered exciseman, they stood with their hair forcing up their bonnets on their head, and stared till their eyes seemed ready to burst from the sockets, at the dreadful object of their fears. A faint light glimmered through the cave, and was reflected from the rows of white buttons with which the black vision was studded; and all the horrid features of the grim apparition were displayed by that kind of dim light by which they could be seen to advantage. They could speak not a word to each other; and their mutual looks excited by sympathy a greater mutual fear than ever; and so they still stood and looked, and wondered, and would have moved their bodies to take a closer survey, but could not for very nervousness—albeit any one of them would have knocked a gauger on the head in an instant. But it was clear, even to themselves, that they could not thus stand staring at a coffin for ever; and it is not unlikely that this prospective impossibility supplied the place of courage;

and so, Donald being the less timid of the two, gradually approached and surveyed their extraordinary visiter. Beckoning his friend Angus forward, he proceeded to force open the lid.

"The corpse o' Julia M'Iver, our goot customer," said he, "as sure as my name's Tonald M'Nair!" And Angus, bending his head down, and holding his hands up, acknowledged the apparent truth. "Murtered py Custaphus, py Cot!" added he, "and puried here to hide the plack, purning shame!"

And they sat down by the coffin, and stared at each other and at the dead beauty, lost in deep cogitation as to what they should do. Their thoughts both took the same direction.

"What is to pe done?" muttered they both at the same instant.

"We cannot inform, and we cannot take the pody to Custaphus," again said Donald; "for that would tiscover us."

"To pe surely na," said Angus; "put we can pury her, cannot we, Tonald?"

"Ay, that we can," answered the latter; "and that we will, too, as surely as my grandmother was puried in the houf o' Kepplemechan."

"Ay, or as mine was puried in Fochapers kirkyard," rejoined Angus; "but we maun let the nicht fa' first, or it may pe said that we were the murterers o' the puir cratur, Ochone! put this is a tam pad world. We maun hae a quaich to keep up oor courage."

And so they set about preparing themselves for the work they had in prospect, by drinking of their own spirits by the side of the coffin; every now and then looking in the face of Julia, and lamenting the unhappy fate of their former visiter, with whom they had drunk many a good bumper, and enjoyed much good fun and frolic.

In this occupation, and exchanging many a comely sentiment on the wickedness of man, and the shortness and uncertainty of human life, they passed several hours, until it should be dark enough for the purpose of interring Julia in reality, which they would execute as surely as ever mortal was consigned to dust. They had drunk till their eyes began to reel in their heads, and till tears of mawkish and drunken sentimentality were dropping on the face of their merry boon companion, as she lay in her bier. A toast of exquisite pathos—"Here's to the good cratur's soul then!" had just escaped from Donald's lips, when Julia opened her eyes, and, altogether unconscious where she lay, obeyed the first impulse of her wakening heart, by holding out her hand, and asking for a glass of the whisky which she saw them drinking with so much good will. Twenty ghosts in their winding sheets could not have produced a greater sensation; for the two Highlanders threw from them their quaichs, and, starting to their feet, flew, with a scream of terror that might have been heard upon the surface of the earth itself into the farthest recesses of the dark abode.

"Heaven pe merciful to us!" they both muttered, as they crouched down beside the stove, and eyed fearfully the moving corpse, through the dim light that came from the half-concealed fire; and their fears had a small chance of being removed or alleviated by what they farther heard and saw; for, as they watched and trembled, they witnessed the rising terrors of Julia herself, who, looking around her, and seeing herself placed in the coffin, had never a shadow of doubt that she was actually buried, and that she was in the region appointed for the wicked daughters of men. She began to groan piteously; and, being yet only half sober, mixed up her thoughts of the lower regions with the feelings she cherished on earth, in such a grotesque manner, that it would have been impossible for an ordinary person to have heard her without at once trembling and laughing

"And am I, of a surety, here at the long run," she muttered, "among devils and devils' dams, who will have never a qualm of mercy for me any more than they have for their other victims, who have broken the laws of the upper world?" And, sighing as deep as her stomach, she paused and again soliloquised :—"But did I not see my good friends, Angus M'Guire and Donald M'Nair, drinking by my side, even at this moment? There cannot be a doubt on't, and they will be dead and damned too for a certainty; but, faith, I care not if I should be here after all, if I fare as they were faring even now, when I saw them with the quaichs in their very hands, as I have seen before in the distillery in the wood of Balmaclallan, so often when I was in the body. Ho! there! Donald M'Nair, it is no other than Julia Briggs that calls you, and she is as thirsty as fire can make her."

The truth now began to dawn on the minds of the Highlanders. "She is no more tead than I am, or any living pody," cried Donald, as he began to move from his dark hole. "I am coming, my tarling Julia; and, py te Holy Virgin, you shall not want what ye are now asking for!" And, pulling Angus along with him, he again approached the coffin, where he saw his old friend looking up from her prostrate position with a pair of as clear eyes as whisky ever illuminated. "Are ye tead or living, Julia?" cried Angus.

"I cannot tell you till I get a quaich," answered Julia; and the medicine was on the instant administered by Donald, when all doubt on the mysterious subject having been dispelled, her friends lifted her from the coffin, and they set to work after their usual manner, which was no other than indulging in numerous potations. The recollection of Gustavus's threat enabled her to explain everything; and as they sat carousing and singing in great glee, they laughed heartily at the circumstance of Gustavus having buried his wife in a distillery, with the view of curing her of a love of whisky.

CHAPTER VIII.

GUSTAVUS GETS INTO TROUBLE AND OUT OF IT.

WHILE they were thus as happy as drink and frolic could make any of the sons or daughters of Adam, Gustavus was meditating on the probable effects on his extraordinary remedy for drunkenness, and enjoying already the triumph he anticipated, as the fruits of his ingenuity. He had cooked for himself a good dinner, and, being thus also in good spirits, he counted the hours as they passed, every moment of which was worth to him a grain of gold, in so far as they would purchase a relief from the thraldom and misery in which he had been so long held. He had given her four hours of the grave, and the increasing length of his stride seemed to indicate that he was fast approaching some resolution, which was probably to go and see how his Julia was faring in her dark habitation. He had left the ropes by which she had been let down, in such a position that he could draw her out again with the greatest certainty, so that he was perfectly at ease on the score of her ultimate safety; but all his efforts, he knew, would be worse than endeavouring to make iron swim, to hold an eel by the tail, to dissect cheese mites, or make a cod warble, or any other *opera inanis,* if she were taken out before she awoke and experienced all the terrors of her situation. He therefore gave her an hour or two more, and then sallied forth as grim as Hercules when he went a bull-baiting, to reconnoitre, and ascertain if any indications of her being awake came from the grave (as he expected it would be) of her bad habits and the womb of her regeneration. A very few movements of his immense limbs brought him to the spot; but not an inch of the rope he could find; and, though he pulled aside the bushes, and stared with goggle eyes into the pit, not a glimpse of the coffin could he discover. The affair was marvellous and unfathomable as the wells of Agamemnon; and he stood and stared with mute wonder, at what appeared to be nothing else in the world than bewitched devilry. He looked around him to see if he could find any traces of either the coffin or Julia Briggs; but all was still and hazy, and nothing could he see or hear; so he tried the pit again, and, to search the bottom of it, he took a long stick from a neighbouring tree, and plunged it in, and groped, and sounded; but it was clear that he never struck on wood, nor indeed upon anything but the soft brush stuff with which the Highlanders had again closed up the aperture. He even descended into the hole, as far as he could reach his limbs, while he held on by the bushy side; and he thus ascertained to a dead certainty that the never a bit of a coffin was there, or indeed anything but furze, among which his feet became entangled. Having got out again with difficulty, he fell to roaring and shouting—"Julia M'Iver! Julia M'Iver!" But no answer was returned, save by the echoing wood, which mocked him like the American bird of many voices that laughs at the eloquence of man. No other conclusion could he come to, but that Julia, coffin and all, had been carried off by the prime minister of Oberon, or some other power, that had determined to punish her for her intemperance, or him for his cruelty; and his former love returning, now that he had, perhaps for ever, lost tne object of it, he grew frantic as the lover of Briseis, and stamped and strode about the wood, accusing himself as the murderer of his wife, and trembling for his neck, which he had put in a position of jeopardy. To add to his terrors, he sometimes thought he heard strange shouts of mirth, coming from under the ground; and his mind still straying to the land of the court of the pigmy king, he fancied that the thieves were rejoicing in their subterranean abodes, over the triumph they had achieved over a mortal creature. The strength or weakness of superstition has nothing to do with the size of the bones, or the strength of thews and sinews of the individuals over whom it exercises its control; and there was no marvel at all that Gustavus felt undefined terrors laying hold of him, as the darkness of the night increased, and the blackness of the mystery enveloped his brain. He had faced cannon in his day, and hewn down warriors as gigantic as himself without a qualm; but that was no reason why he should not quail before the powers of infernal or subterranean agency; and so to be sure it was well proved by what followed; for he marched home as if he had been on a retreat, with, perhaps, more ideas in his head than ever could have been supposed to find an entry into the impenetrable fortress which, in spite of rockets, he had so long carried on his shoulders.

He passed the night in pacing his apartment, expecting every moment that Julia, who was occupied according to her heart's desire, would return to her home—but no Julia came; and in the morning he was saluted by the carrier, who asked him, with a knowing look, what had become of Mrs M'Iver, and to what use he had applied the coffin he (the carrier) had seen through the window when he last passed the house. Gustavus stared at him in amazement, without deigning one word of reply; but, the man being gone, he saw, with as much light as his brain was capable of reflecting, something like a foundation for a charge of murder against him, in the event of his wife not making her appearance. This conclusion wound up the evils that he had entailed upon himself by entering into the fearful state of matrimony; and there can be little doubt that, if he had known the Greek of the woman-hater, Simonides, of which of course he knew never a syllable, he would have thundered forth the whole epithets of his poem in a voice of thunder. Another day passed, and no Julia was yet to be seen; and on the second day, straggling individuals began to pry about the house, just as if a murder had been committed there, and they were looking for blood-spots. He grew every moment more terrified, was unable to cook, or even to eat, and roamed about with the muscles of his face hanging over the maxillary bones like flaps of leather, and sunken eyes that seemed to look inwards, where there was in fact nothing to be seen worth looking at. Every step frightened him, and every sound startled him, from reveries of trials and interrogations, and hanging and dissecting; for he looked every hour for a visit from the authorities. He had sense enough to see that everything was against him—the disappearance of Julia—their endless quarrels—the coffin—all arrayed against a drivelling, idiot statement about trying to wean his wife from the quaich by pretending to bury her alive.

Things were fast progressing to being just as bad as there is any occasion for them to be when a sinful man is the victim; for, some time afterwards, the mother of Julia herself, with two friends from the Canongate, came to see the married pair. Now, Gustavus saw them at a long distance, and, knowing that he could not account for his wife, he resolved upon sneaking away into the woods, after locking the door; and this accordingly he did in double quick time; but he had not got far away, when, upon turning to look behind him, he saw the carrier again returning, and very soon stop at his door, and enter into conversation with the three women. He watched all their motions, and it was apparent to him that the very affair of the murder they supposed he had committed was alone the subject of their conversation.

Nay, he saw them begin to try to force open the door and, able to contain himself no longer, he said to himself—

"Shall Gustavus M'Iver, who has killed a dozen of Frenchmen in one day, be afraid of three women? The never will he, by Saint Sebastian!"

So he went back to the house; and when the three women and the carrier saw him coming out of the planting, they set up such a loud scream as had never been heard in these woods since the reign of the wolves, and ran up to him, crying out, that he was a base and a bloody murderer, and demanding to see the body of the sacrificed Julia, who, as her mother ejaculated, was never intended by nature to be the wife of such a fearful ogre.

"Give me the body of my daughter," she said, "dead or alive. Where is the coffin that the carrier saw standing in the house? It is gone, and Julia is in it—buried, no doubt, in some hole of the woods. Why will you not speak, Gustavus M'Iver?"

Now, the very best reason on earth could be assigned for Gustavus saying nothing—and that was, that he had of a real truth nothing in the wide extent of his brain to say, that any one in the world, far less the mother of his wife, would believe for one instant of time. So he stood and rolled over the three women his large eyes, just, as the mother said, as if he would have eaten them all three, as she suspected he had done her daughter; but the never a vocable escaped from his lips.

"Why will you not speak, Gustavus?" cried the mother.

"Why will you not speak, man?" cried another of the women.

"Why will you not speak?" cried they all together in one question, so loud that no question since the time when all the Barons of England asked, in one cry, King John to give them their rights, had ever exceeded it in intensity and vociferation.

But it was clear this could last no longer than the patience of the women; and every one knows that the time comprehended by the longevity of that feminine virtue, is not so long as the life of Methuselah; so, in a minute, they fell on him with their nails, and rugged his hair, and scratched his face, and pulled him to the earth, and trampled upon him, till he who had fought in the Peninsula began to think that it was time for him to call up his old courage, and fight once again in his advanced years. So, rising up, he placed himself in an attitude which he knew had produced terrible effects in former times; and, to be sure, so it might, for he gnashed his teeth, and held out his yard-long arms, and rolled his eyes in such a manner, yet saying not a word all the while, that the women got alarmed, and cried to the carrier to assist them; but the man was off the moment he saw there was a chance of battle. So the women gave in, and began to try the soothing system with him—an effort in which they were as successful as their sex ever is when a man is to be humbugged; and Gustavus was on the instant mollified into softness, and even lugubrious sentimentality.

CHAPTER IX.

AN APPARITION.

There was a pause, after which Gustavus, offering two of the women an arm each, leaving the other to bring up the rear, he began a solemn march to the scene of his grief—the mysterious spot, where he threw down his long, lank body upon the ground, and muttered his sorrows between his lubber lips, in accents that would have put to flight the ugliest satyr that ever sported in a wood. He took up his station close by the mouth of the deceptive grave, to mitigate his sorrow and fear by a little sentiment—a coarse commodity, that might have made another laugh, but sufficient to make him weep. That day he might be in prison and ruined for ever; and, as for Julia M'Iver, he would never see her again. "She has been in this hole three days," said he, pointing to the grave.

"Ochone! ochone!" roared the three women, crying bitterly.

Meanwhile, his heavy eye was fixed on the ground; he heard a noise, and, looking up, what on earth should he see but the head of Julia herself above the ground, and all the rest of her body below it? She leered at him and the women knowingly, and laughed till the woods rang; and, rising up out of the very hole where she had been interred, she ran, or rather staggered to him—for she was fresh from the still—flung herself around his neck, and hugged him with a grasp of embrace that many a husband would give a hundred pounds for any day. Nor was Gustavus insensible to its efficacy; for he returned the embrace, and even cried and blubbered like (as all sentimental writers say when they wish to express great sensibility—that is, babyism) a child—and a very pretty child to be sure he was. We cannot tell how long the embrace lasted. Everything in nature has been measured but love embraces. Writers are chary on the subject; and very knowingly, too, because they know that it is what is called "a kittle point;" but we have no such qualms, and so boldly assert, that Mr and Mrs M'Iver's embrace lasted at least three minutes.

This new apparition transcended all they had yet seen or experienced; for how she could have lain three days and nights in the cold earth, and risen on the fourth as drunk as she was when she was interred, puzzled them beyond any conjuration they had ever heard of. But Gustavus was glad to see her on any condition, and took her straight home, to get an account from her, when she was sober of all the wonders she had seen in the bowels of the earth; where, in the midst of Hop and Mop, Pip and Trip, Fib and Tib, and Jill and Jin, and all the other imps of Mab's court, she had doubtless been since the day on which she was let down into the pit. Whether he or the women ever got this information or not, we cannot say; but it is certain that he attempted no further cure of Julia's irregular habits, contenting himself with the evil lot of a bad wife, which is, perhaps, the only one on earth that it is utterly impossible to get quit of by any other means than death.

THE FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGE.

"I BEG your pardon, sir," said a venerable-looking, white-headed man, accosting me one day, about six weeks ago, as I was walking alone near the banks of the Whitadder; "ye are one of the authors of the 'Border Tales,' sir—are ye not?"

Not being aware of anything in the "Tales of the Borders" of which I need to be ashamed, and moreover being accustomed to meet with such salutations, after glancing at the stranger, with the intention, I believe, of taking the measure of his mind, or scrutinizing his motive in asking the question, I answered—"I am, sir."

"Then, sir," said he, "I can tell ye a true story, and one that happened upon the Borders here within my recollection, and which was also within my own knowledge, which I think would make a capital tale."

Now, I always rejoice in hearing any tale or legend from the lips of a grey-haired chronicler. I do not recollect the period when I did not take an interest in such things; and a tradition of the olden time, or a tale that pictured human nature as it is, ever made the unceasing birr, birring of the spinning-wheel—which the foot, belike, of an aged widow kept in perpetual motion—as agreeable to me as the choicest music. For, what is tradition, but the fragments which History left or lost in its progress to eternity; and which Poetry, following in its wake, gathered up as treasures too precious to be overwhelmed by the approaching waves of oblivion, and, breathing upon them the influence of its own immortal spirit, embalmed them in the hearts and in the memories of men unto all generations? Though, therefore, it was no ancient legend which the stranger had to relate, yet, knowing that it might not on that account be the less interesting, I thanked him, "and with greedy ears devoured up his discourse."

The story which he then related to me, I shall, therefore, after him, communicate to my readers.

You will excuse me in not mentioning the name of the town in which the chief incidents mentioned in our story occurred. There may be some yet living to whom some of them might not be agreeable. I shall, therefore, speak of it as the town of H——, and other circumstances referred to may lead you to form an idea of "its whereabouts."

Many years have passed—at least forty—since the period at which our story commences; and there then dwelt in the town of H—— one Walter Kerr. (So you will allow me to call him.) His parents were what are generally called respectable sort of people; for the house in which they dwelt was their own, and there were also three or four others, all very good and respectable-looking houses, (as we say again,) the rents of which they received from their tenants. But there is no word in our language to which less respect is shewn than the word respectability. It is prostituted every day. Is is no matter whether a man be the proprietor of one house, one acre, one pound, or a hundred houses, a thousand acres, and ten thousand pounds; neither houses, acres, nor money can make him truly respectable. As the sun, moon, and stars shed light upon the earth, so do honesty, virtue, and strict integrity confer respectability on the head of their possessor. I care not what a man's situation in life may be, nor whether he be a hewer of wood or a drawer of water, the lord of a forest, or one who hath a fleet upon the seas; shew me a good, a virtuous, and an upright man—and there is a respectable man, be his rank or situation in life what it may. The parents of Walter Kerr, however, were respectable in a better and a truer sense of the term than that of being merely persons of a certain property; they were Christians not only in their profession but in their practice. Walter was by far the cleverest of the family; and from his boyhood his parents designed him for the pulpit, and gave him an education accordingly. Like many parents, they thought that his cleverness was a sufficient reason why they should bring him up to the sacred profession, without once considering how far the seriousness of his thoughts and habits fitted him for preparing for the office. It must be acknowledged, however, that in this they were not singular. We find hundreds who, without perceiving either cleverness or piety in their favourite son, resolve to make him a minister. Yea, frequently, from his very cradle his calling is determined. I remember having heard a good woman say—"If I live to have another son, and he be spared to me, I shall bring him up for the kirk!"

But the parents of Walter Kerr were possessed of more discretion; and when they found that he was averse to their proposal of his becoming a preacher, they abandoned the idea, though not without reluctance, and some tears on the part of his mother. Now, Walter was a youth of a gentle temper and an affectionate heart; but, at the same time, he seemed formed for being what you would term a man of business. He was shrewd, active, speculative, and calculating, with quite a sufficient degree of caution, as ballast, to regulate his more ardent propensities. At his own request, he was bound apprentice to a general merchant in his native town; and before he was twenty-one years of age, he commenced business for himself. He began with but a small stock in trade; for his parents could not afford a great deal to set him up. Yet he was attentive to business; he pushed it, and his trade increased, and his stock became more various. He had scarcely, however, been two years in business, when he took unto himself a portionless wife. His parents were displeased—they looked upon him as lost.

Every one said that he had done a foolish thing, and agreed that it was madness in him to marry, at least so hastily, and before he could say that even the goods in his shop were his own. But people are very apt to talk a great deal of nonsense upon this subject. The important question is not *when* a man marries, but *who* he marries. They talk of a wife tying up his hands, and placing a barrier before his prospects; in short, as bringing a blight over his worldly expectations, like an untimely frost nipping and withering an opening bud. Now all this is mere twaddle—a shewing off of self-wisdom, to make known how much more wisely we have or would have acted than the person referred to. It is one of the thousand popular fallacies which ever float on the surface of the chit-chat of society. A married man, young or old, is always a more sponsible sort of character than a bachelor. If a man take unto himself an amiable and a prudent wife, even though she bring him not a shilling as a dowry, and although he may be young in years and a beginner in business, he doeth well. Had he doubled his stock, his credit and his custom, he would not have done better; for he has a double motive to do so. He has found one to beguile his dulness, to soothe care, to cheer him forward, and to stimulate him to exertion; and that, too, tenderly as the breath of May fanneth and kisseth the young leaves and flowers into life and beauty. But all this dependeth, as hath been said, upon her amiableness and prudence; for, if the wife whom a man taketh for "better for worse," possess not these indispensable requisites, he weddeth a living sorrow, he nurseth an adder in his bosom, he giveth his right hand to ruin.

Now, the wife of Walter Kerr possessed those qualities which rendereth a virtuous woman as a crown of glory to her husband. She was the daughter of a decayed farmer, and her name was Hannah Jordan. To her the misfortunes of her parents were not such; for, while they had made her a stranger to luxury, they had introduced her to the acquaintanceship of frugality and industry. At the time she gave her hand to Walter Kerr, she was scarce twenty; and to have looked on her, you would have thought of some fair and lovely flower which sought the sequestered dale or the shaded glen, where its beauties might blush unseen—young, modest, meek, affectionate, and beautiful, man never led a lovelier bride to the altar. Her husband soon found that whatever the world might think or say of the step he had taken, he had done well and wisely. She not only became his assistant in his business, and one who took much care and anxiety from his mind, but her affection fell upon his bosom like the shadow of an angel's wing, that was spread over him to guard him from evil; and he found her, too, as a monitor whispering truth in the accents of love. If he acquired money in trade, she taught him how to keep it and profit by it—and that is a "secret worth knowing." Let it not be supposed that she was one of those miserly beings who scrape farthings together for the sake of hoarding them. In her spirit, meanness had no place; but there were two proverbs which she never suffered herself to forget, or those around her to neglect, and those were, that "a penny saved is a penny gained," and "wilful waste makes woful want." Nor do I wonder that the latter saying took deep root in her heart; for, as having experienced privation in the days of her father's distress, there is nothing can be more painful to those who have known and felt what want is, than to see food, for want of which they were once ready to perish, wasted, and that, too, perchance, while a hunger-stricken beggar has been turned rudely from the door while he prayed for a morsel to eat. She would not see the crumbs which fell from the table wasted. In this her husband readily perceived the propriety of her conduct, and he esteemed her the more as he witnessed it; but the force of her first adage, that "a penny saved is a penny gained," he was slow to appreciate in its true light. Yet for this, perhaps, there was a reason. Previous to his marriage, he had been in the habit of spending the evening after business hours, with a club of young tradesmen and other acquaintances. Now, habit is the pettiest and the most imperious of all tyrants. Even with a pinch of snuff it can make you its slave. It renders you miserable, until you once more bend the knee before it. But, as I have said, habit, though an imperious, is a petty tyrant; and three weeks' resolution, though you will have struggles to encounter, will enable you to snap asunder the strongest chain that ever habit forged. I do not mean the habits, the seeds of which we acquire in infancy, and which grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength, and which, in fact, perform a part of our education, (though we do not admit it,) until they are set down as things belonging to or ingrafted in our natures; but I mean the habits which we acquire in after-life. And, as has been stated, Walter Kerr had acquired a habit of attending an evening club, of which he had been a member during the last year of his apprenticeship; and, from the period that he commenced business up to his marriage, and a few days after he had brought home his wife, he attended the club as usual. He was happy in the society of his young and fair wife; but still, (as we say in the north,) there was a "craiking" within him for something to make him perfectly happy, and that "craiking" was to attend the club as usual. Now, it was not a club in which they either drank deep or sat late—for it was a regulation amongst them that no man should sit in the club-room after ten o'clock, or drink more than three glasses; but, although they had this wholesome regulation, they had no by-law against what many of them called "*adjournments*," or "*sederunts*," and at which, though out of the club-room, the three glasses frequently became six.

With regard to the "sederunts," however, Hannah had no cause to complain of her husband; for he never had been one of those who formed them. Neither did she murmur, or consider herself neglected, on account of his attending the club; for she reasoned with herself, that, after the cares, toils, and business of the day, he required some relaxation; and although her company might be more agreeable to him than any other, yet she knew that the beauty and the fragrance of a flower does not increase by for ever looking upon it, and on it only, but that our admiration of the flower increases, as we pass over the weeds which we behold around us. Yet, she thought that every night was too much—more than relaxation required; and she thought, also, that a shilling a-night was six shillings in the week (for let it not be thought that a club, of which Walter Kerr was a member, met on the Sabbath), and that six shillings a-week was nearly sixteen pounds in the year—a sum that might frequently be of use when accounts became due, and money was difficult to get in. She therefore delicately and tenderly endeavoured to break her husband from the habit he had acquired; but she attempted it in vain. He believed himself to be one of the most frugal and industrious tradesmen in the town; and nothing but bringing the fact plainly and broadly before him, seemed sufficient to convince him that there was aught of expensiveness in his habits. But his wife, more delicately and efficiently, did so convince him. They were talking together of many things, and their conversation lent wings to the short hours, when, an opportunity offering, she related to him an anecdote, which brought home to himself his nightly attendance at the club; and, as I know the story to be no allegory, nor child of the brain, but a fact, I shall relate it to you.

"In a town," said she, "not many miles south of the Border, there dwelt a man who was by trade a mechanic, and who was the father of seven children. For sixteen years he had never wanted employment (when he chose to work), and his earnings averaged from five-and-thirty shillings to two pounds a-week. But, with a number of associates, he was in the habit of attending, daily and nightly, what they termed their house of call. In the morning, as he went to his labour, he could not pass it without having what he called his '*nipper*,' or what some of the good people in Scotland call their '*morning*,' which, being interpreted, meaneth a glass of gin, rum, or whisky." (For gentle as Hannah was, there was a sprinkling of the wag in her character.) "At mid-day," she added, "he had to give it another call; and to pass it on returning from his work at night was out of the question. Sometimes, and not unfrequently, when he called in for his 'nipper' in the morning, he sat down—in a room which had two windows, looking east and west—and forgot to rise until, after he had seen from the one window the sun rising, he beheld it set from the other. But it was the force of habit—it had grown in upon him, as he said; and what could the poor man do? He beheld his wife broken-hearted, going almost in rags, and their affection had changed into bickerings and reproaches. His children, too, were half-starved, ill-clad, and unschooled; and for what education they got, he thought not of paying the schoolmaster—he felt nothing in hand for his money, and therefore could not see the force of the debt. But the poor man could not help it. It was true he earned about two pounds a-week, but which way the money went he could not tell. He did not, as he thought, deserve the reproaches of his wife. His 'morning' was only fourpence, his call at mid-day the same, and his evening pipe and glass a shilling or eighteenpence—that, he thought, was nothing, for a man working so hard as he did; and when he did take a day now and then, he said that was not worth reckoning, for his clay could not keep together without moisture; and as for the glass or two which he took on a Sunday, why, they were not worth mentioning. Thus he could see no cause for the unhappiness of his wife, the poverty of his house, and the half-nakedness of his family. He had to 'do as other people did, or he might leave their society;' and he attributed all to bad management somewhere, but not on his part. But one Sunday morning he had lingered in their house of call longer than his companions, and he was sitting there when the churchwardens and parish-officers went their rounds, and came to the house. To conceal him from them there, and avoid the penalty—

"'Tom,' said the landlady, 'here the wardens a-comin'. If they find thee here, lad, or meet thee goin' out, thou wilt be fined, and me too; and it may give my hoose a bad name. Coom up stairs, and I will shew thee through the hoose, while they examine the tap and the parlour.'

"So saying, Tom the mechanic followed the hostess from room to room, wondering at what he saw; for the furniture, as he said to himself, was like a nobleman's, and he marvelled how such things could be; and while he did so, he contrasted the splendour he beheld around him with the poverty and wretchedness of his own garret. And, after shewing him through several rooms, she at last, with a look of importance, ushered him into what she called *the drawing-room*—but, now-a-days, drawing-rooms have become as common as gooseberries, and every house with three rooms and a kitchen has one. Poor Tom the mechanic was amazed as he beheld the richly-coloured and fancy-figured carpet; he was afraid to tread on it—and, indeed, he was told to clean his feet well before he did so. But he was more astonished when he beheld a splendid mirror, with a brightly gilded and carved frame, which reached almost from the ceiling to the floor, and in which he beheld his person, covered with his worn-out and un-holiday-like habiliments, from top to toe, though they were his only suit. Yet more was he amazed, when the ostentatious mistress of the house, opening what appeared to him a door in the wall, displayed to him rows of shining silver plate. He raised his eyes, he lifted up his hands—'Lack! Ma'am!' says he, 'how d'ye get all these mighty fine things?'

"And the landlady, laughing at his simplicity, said—'Why, lad, by fools' pennies to be sure.'

"But the words 'fools' pennies' touched his heart as if a sharp instrument had pierced it; and he thought unto himself, 'I am one of those fools;' and he turned away and left the house with the words written upon his conscience; and, as he went, he made a vow unto himself that, until that day twelve months, he would neither enter the house he had left, nor any other house of a similar description—but that on that day twelve months he would visit it again. When he went home, his wife was surprised at his home-coming; for it was seldom he returned during the day. He had two shillings left; and taking them from his pocket, he gave them to one of his daughters, desiring her to go out and purchase a quartern loaf and a quantity of tea, sugar, and butter. His wife was silent from wonder. He took her hand and said—'Why, thou seemest to wonder at me, old lass; but I tell thee what—I have had a lesson this mornin' that I shan't forget; and when thou findest me throwing away even a penny again, I will give thee liberty to call me by any name thou likes.'

"His wife was astonished, and his family were astonished; and in the afternoon he took down the neglected and dust-covered Bible, and read a chapter aloud—though certainly not from any correct religious feeling. But he had made the resolution to reform, and he had learned enough to know that reading his Bible was a necessary and excellent helper towards the accomplishment of his purpose. It was the happiest Sabbath his family had ever spent; and his wife said that, even on her wedding Sunday, she was not half so happy.

But, the day twelve months from that on which he had seen the splendid furniture, the rich carpet, the gorgeous mirror, and the costly plate, arrived. It was a summer morning, and he requested his wife and children to dress before seven o'clock. During the last twelve months, his wife and his children had found it a pleasure to obey him, and they did so readily. He took the arm of his wife in his, and each of them led a younger child by the hand, while the elder walked hand in hand before them; and they went on until they came unto his former house of call; and standing opposite it, he said unto his wife—

"'Now, old woman, thou and the little ones will go in here with me for five minutes, and thou shalt see something that will please thee.'

"So they went into the house together, and Tom the mechanic found his old associates seated around the room as he was wont to see them twelve months before, just as though they had been fixtures belonging to the establishment: and as he, with his wife and children, entered, his former companions rose, and exclaimed in wonder—'Ha! Thomas! what wind has blown thee here?' For, though they called him merely *Tom* before, he had *Thomas* from them now. And, as the landlady entered and saw a well-dressed man and woman, with seven clean and well-dressed children around them, in her tap-room, she wondered exceedingly; for their appearance contrasted strangely with that of her other customers amongst whom they were seated.

"'Why, don't you know me, Ma'am?' inquired Thomas, observing her look of curiosity and wonderment.

"'Why, I can hardly say as how I do, sir,' she replied; 'and yet I am sure I have seen you somewhere.'

"'That you have, Ma'am,' answered he; 'I am your old customer, Tom Such-an-one.'

"'Lack me! is it possible!—and so you are! Why, what a change there is upon thee! thou art quite a gentleman turned. And is this lady thy wife, and these thy children? Well, now! how smart you have them all! How in the world do you manage it?'

"'O Ma'am,' said Tom the mechanic, 'nothing in the world is more easy—the *fools' pennies* which I before gave to buy your fine carpets, your mirror, and your silver plate, *I now keep in my own pocket.*' So saying, he bowed to her, and wishing her good morning, with his wife's arm in his, they and their children left the house and returned home. Such," added Hannah, "is the true story of Tom the mechanic."

The anecdote told upon her husband; and when she had concluded, he arose and took her hand, and said—

"You were right, love. I see it now—the story of Tom the mechanic has convinced me that a penny saved is a penny gained: and I shall remember it."

Walter Kerr did remember it; and from that day he ceased his nightly visits to the club. The world prospered with him; and in a short time there was not a more thriving or a more respected merchant in the town of H—— than Walter Kerr. Every one began to say that he was greatly indebted for his good fortune to the excellent management of his wife. Even his parents at length admitted that his marrying Hannah Jerdan was the most fortunate thing that ever their son Walter did; and he himself said that she had been worth to him her weight in gold.

They had two children. Their first-born was a boy, and his name was Francis; and their daughter they had called Jacobini, after an only brother of Hannah's and of whom nothing had been heard for many years. No poet in his waking dreams of domestic bliss hath pictured a happier pair than were Walter Kerr and his gentle Hannah. She was unto him as a guardian spirit, an affectionate counsellor, and a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And as their children grew up in beauty before them, ike fair flowers in spring, stealing day by day into loveliness, so grew their joy.

But, within eight years after his marriage, an unbidden guest—who entereth alike the palace and the cottage, whose eye pierceth through the deepest gloom of the dungeon, as he smiteth the prisoner and saith, "There is no darkness like unto my darkness"—placed his noiseless foot upon the threshold of the prosperous merchant, and with his cold and poisoned finger touched the bosom of the wife and mother.

Walter Kerr beheld his young, his beautiful, and excellent wife laid upon her dying bed, with the last breath of life quivering on her lips. His agony was the wildness, the bitterness of despair. He hung over her, he wrung his hands, he smote them on his bosom, he wept. He was as one who hath no hope, and on whom misery—deep, desolating, everlasting misery—had fallen. He would not, he could not be comforted.

"My own!—my own!" he exclaimed; "I cannot, cannot part with her!"

His was the extremeness of grief. An hour had arrived of the approach of which he had never thought, or if he had ever imagined that it would come, he had thought of it as belonging to a day that was far, far distant, and which might come when age would lead them together gently to the grave.

The young, the dying wife, stretched forth her trembling and feeble hand; and as he raised it to his fevered lips—

"Weep not, dear Walter," she said falteringly; "but, oh! when I am gone, be kind to my dear children. And should you"—she added, but her voice failed, and tears mingled with the cold dews of death upon her cheeks. But in a few moments she again added—"Walter, should you marry another, for my sake see that she be as a mother to our children."

"O Hannah!" he sobbed. Her words entered his agonized bosom like a barbed instrument, adding sorrow to sorrow, and pain to pain. He thought of her and of her only, and from the idea of another his soul revolted.

She called her children to her bedside, and she endeavoured to raise herself upon her elbow. She kissed them —she called them by their names—her last tears fell upon their cheeks and blended with theirs, and she bestowed upon them a dying mother's blessing. She took their little hands, and placing them in her husband's, gazed tenderly and imploringly on his face, and sinking back upon her pillow, with a deep sigh, her gentle spirit sought the world which is beyond death.

It was a melancholy sight to behold Walter Kerr with his young son and almost infant daughter in his hands, standing weeping over their mother's grave, while the awful, the mortal words, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," were pronounced, and the sound of the cold red earth falling on the coffin rang rudely on his ears.

For many months there walked not on the earth a more sorrowful widower. His heart, his hopes, his joys, seemed buried in the grave of her who had been his wife. His sole consolation was in his children, and he doted over them with more than a father's fondness. But he was still a young man, he was yet a prosperous one, and he had obtained the reputation of being wealthy.

His wife had been dead somewhat more than four years, when there came to reside in H—— a fair and fashionable maiden, whose name was Harriet Scott. She soon obtained the reputation of being the greatest beauty in the town, and was the favourite toast of every bachelor; amongst whom, if she did not conquer many hearts, she conquered many eyes; and if she had not lovers, she had manifold admirers. She was the daughter of an old military man, a major, belonging to some royal veteran battalion. Beautiful she certainly was; but she was vain as beautiful; and her father's pay was all that stood between her and poverty.

There are but few men, and especially mercantile men, who are used to calculate and consider consequences, that are found guilty of the folly of offering their hand to a poor and fashionable woman. What fascination the gay and beautiful Miss Scott threw over our young and rich widower—

> "What dreams, what charms,
> What conjurations, or what mighty magic"—

I cannot tell. The gossips of H——, at their tea parties, said she had "set her cap" at him. But I am not much acquainted with the witchcraft of "setting a cap," or how much the term implies. This I know, that when Walter Kerr first saw Miss Harriet Scott, he thought, what every person said, "that she was very beautiful," though he also thought that she was a vain girl, conscious of her own attractions, and much too fond of dress and display. But, after he had seen her frequently, and she spoke with him familiarly, and that, too, in a voice which was almost as sweet as her face was beautiful—and when he saw, or thought he saw, that she smiled on him more frequently and more sweetly than on any one else—he began to think that she was an interesting girl, and by no means the vain creature he had at first imagined her to be. It is dangerous when a man begins to think a woman interesting. As their acquaintance grew, he discovered that she had no vanity whatever.

"She is," thought he unto himself, "the fairest and gentlest being I have met with since"—"I laid my Hannah in the dust," he would have continued; but, as the thought arose in his bosom, a tear gathered in his eyes, a low sigh escaped from him, and a glow overspread his face.

Every day, however, the beautiful Miss Scott became more interesting in the eyes of the thriving merchant, and his wealth more and more attractive to her; till in an evil hour he offered her his hand, and with a sweet blush, like the shadow of a rose leaf on a lily, the proposal was accepted.

His neighbours said, that, if his first wife had enabled him to make a fortune, he had got one who would spend it now. And they had not been husband and wife many months, until events began to shew that there was some truth in what their neighbours said. The dress of Mrs Kerr was gayer and far more costly than it had ever been as Miss Scott; though it was, from its extravagance, a subject of conversation, or what was called "a town's talk," then; and even Walter could not avoid contrasting, in his own mind, the showy and expensive attire of his living spouse with the plain and modest neatness of her who was not. She was kind enough to the children for a time; and she called them "the little creatures," and "Kerr's children." But she saw them seldom. "Not," she said, "that she disliked them, but that she could not be troubled with children being much about her."

She was not long, however, in beginning to hint that it was rather derogatory in a Major's daughter to have become the wife of a provincial shopkeeper. The smell of the goods, too, shocked her nerves, and injured her health.

"The smell from the shop hurt your nerves, dear!" said her husband—and the apartments they inhabited were immediately over the shop and warehouse—"the smell from the shop hurt you!"—continued he—"that is very strange! My poor Hannah never complained of such a thing, and I'm sure many a hundred times has she stood in it from morning to night."

"Don't talk to me, sir, of your Hannah, if you please," added she; "if I threw myself away upon you, I was not to be insulted with odious comparisons about your Hannah."

"Odious, indeed!" thought Walter, with a sigh; but he durst not express what he thought; for before this he had begun to discover the inflammable materials which his wife's temper was made of.

"I tell you, Kerr," added she, "the effluvia from your shop is insupportable. It shocks my nerves continually—it is killing me altogether."

"Truly, my dear," rejoined he, I am at a loss to understand ye. Really every other person you meet talks about their nerves, and being nervous, now-a-days. But since I can remember, there were no such words in use—that is, as they are now applied. For, when we spoke of anything being nervous, we meant something that was strong and powerful, such as a nervous sermon, or a nervous speech in the House of Commons; and if we spoke of a man of nerve, it was a strong-bodied or a strong-minded man that we meant. But now-a-days the meaning is quite reversed; and when a person is spoken of as being nervous, or very nervous, it is always in reference to some silly shaking body, that has no nerve at all. And it is my candid opinion, dear, that nobody in this country ever complained of being troubled with the nerves until spirit-drinking and hot tea-drinking came so much in vogue!"

"O you savage!—you barbarian!" screamed Mrs Kerr, who seemed to have been struggling with a hysteric which now came upon her. We have seen people who have a convenient habit of assuming this pride-produced malady, and Mrs Kerr was now trying the effect of the experiment upon her husband; and the violence of the pretended paroxysm increased as he manifested the more and more tenderness and anxiety to soothe her; and when she had caused him to believe that he had succeeded in restoring her to consciousness—"Kerr," said she, "we must, if you do not intend to kill me, leave this horrid house."

"Leave the house, dear!" said he in surprise—"where could we go?"

Go!" she replied—"Why don't you take or build a respectable house out of the town, where a person could receive their friends. You cannot expect any genteel person to call upon us here, to be suffocated with the fumes of your nasty shop and warehouse."

Walter was once more tempted to speak of his poor Hannah, and was about to say, that the most genteel people in the town and neighbourhood had visited her, without once hinting that there was anything disagreeable to them arising from the proximity of the shop and warehouse, or from the mixed goods which they contained. But it is a common saying, and a good one, that "second thoughts are best;" and Walter Kerr thought twice, and when he did so, he perceived that to speak of his dear and buried Hannah again, to her who now was to him as she was, would only be throwing oil upon a flame. He forebore and was silent.

I think—and so perhaps many of my readers will think—that, though a shrewd man, he was of too complying a temper. He was ready to sacrifice too much for what is called *ease* and *peace*. But in so doing, he was only like many others, whom you will find ready to say—"Oh, we are willing to do anything for the sake of peace." And no doubt this is a very good spirit; but it may be carried too far. It is quite as possible for a man to be in error by enduring too much as by allowing too little. There is a middle path in everything; and it is always the safest, and generally the best. Extremes are always bad—so bad, indeed, that they are like two wild bulls running to encounter each other, and meeting on a common path, they thrust their horns into the foreheads of each other, and thus forcibly and painfully become as one body, to the obstruction of the thoroughfare. But, that Walter Kerr was too fond of yielding, will be proved from the circumstances of his having purchased a few acres of ground, and commenced the building of a country-house, about three miles out of H——, within three months after the conversation which I have related between him and Mrs Kerr took place.

Well, the house was finished, and a very neat, and I may say elegant-looking house it was. They had a garden behind it. Immediately in front was a parterre, tastefully laid out in plots; and between the parterre and the highway was a shrubbery, which, from the number of poplar and other rapid-growing trees in it, was no doubt intended, in a few years, to have the designation of "a plantation" or "a wood." But, after the villa was built, Mrs Kerr discovered that new furniture was necessary for their new house.

"In truth, Harriet, my dear," said Mr Kerr, "I can in no way see that new furniture is necessary. Ye will consider it would be extremely expensive. All that we have is strong and durable; I can see no fault with it."

He would have added, "It was all of my Hannah's choosing;" but every day the power of Harriet, her fashionable successor, had increased; and, although Walter knew not whence that power came, he was but too conscious of its existence; and he spoke not what he wished to have said.

To his last remarks she replied—"O Kerr! Kerr! when shall I get you to forget your low-life shop and counter? Why did I marry a man that has no ideas beyond saying 'Thank you—I am much obliged to you,' to every petty penny customer! And a man of your fortune, too!—Oh, meanness!—Kerr, I am ashamed of you."

He stood out for a considerable time; but, for "the sake of peace," he had already yielded to building the villa; and what was once done, was more easily done again—therefore he agreed to fit it up with new furniture. The building and the furnishing of the house cost Mr Kerr no small sum; and his name did not stand at the bank as worthy of credit to the amount that it once did. In his moments of solitude he thought of these things, and sighed.

Yet this was not all: when they had taken possession of the house, and Mrs Kerr had it, and the new and splendid furniture, with the garden, the parterre, and the shrubbery, there was something still wanting—and that was, a genteel *approach* to the house. Its present entrance was, as Mrs Kerr said, "no better than a gate to a cow park—as vulgar as the abominable shop and warehouse; and enough to prevent any genteel person from coming near them." Indeed, she could not ask them while they had such an *approach.*

Yield once to a woman's caprice, and you may yield always. Two instances in which he yielded have been mentioned, and he yielded a third time.

"Now," thought he, "Harriet will surely be satisfied. I have built her a fine house, and fitted it up with fine furniture, and I have made her an avenue to it that a nobleman might enter. Oh, if my dear departed Hannah could look up, and see the folly into which I have been drawn, she would shake her head, and say—'Walter, Walter!'—And well she might."

And as Walter Kerr thought thus, he burst into tears.

But his wife was not content. The house, the garden, the shrubbery, the parterre, and the approach were not enough. She wanted her genteel friends about her, now that she was in a situation to receive them; and she brought them about her. She treated them, she feasted them. They were there not only one day in the week, but every day, by dozens and by scores. Our unfortunate merchant became a cipher in his own house and at his own table. He had formerly considered what are called genteel people as a rare sort of individuals, to be met with occasionally; but he now found them plentiful as gooseberries in August. They surrounded him like locusts. They were

"Thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa."

And what surprised him most was, that first one and then another said to him, during dinner, (in accordance with the absurd practice which still prevails)—"Mr Kerr, I shall be happy to drink a glass of wine with you;" and scarce had he swallowed one glass, (for he always took off his heel-taps,) until another said the same thing, and another and another, as though they had entered into concert to fire a regular *feu-de-joie* at his head; and he thought it a very hard thing that he could not take a glass of wine in his own house, without caring, or being told whether those who ate and drank at his expense, were happy at his drinking or not. Moreover, they acted as though they considered him honoured by their eating and drinking; and he saw their respect lavished on his genteel better half, while he was passed over as a sort of nobody. These were almost every-day doings, and he began to find that they were making fearful inroads on his cash account; in short, he discovered that if he had acquired a fortune rapidly during the life of his first wife, he was spending it as rapidly now.

One day, after a close examination into his books, (and it was a very beautiful day, but there had been wet weather for some time before, and the roads were bad and disagreeable to walk upon,) he returned home with the determination of saying unto his wife—"Harriet, it is impossible for me to stand the course of extravagance we are now pursuing. I shall be very happy to entertain your friends occasionally; but really this treating of them every week, I might almost say every day, is too much for any man in business to stand. Look at my profits and expenditure during the last three years." And he had a statement drawn out.

But, as I have said, this was only a speech which he intended to deliver in the presence of his wife. Scarce had he sat down in the parlour where she was, until he perceived, from her looks and manner, that there was a coming storm; and he knew that the address which he had prepared would be ill-timed. He therefore sat in silence; but she did not long follow his example.

"Kerr," said she, "I don't know whether you mean to kill me, or what you mean to do; but I am kept here, mewed up like a prisoner."

"Me keep you mewed up, dear!" said he; "ye certainly know that ye have full scope and liberty to do as ye please—ye are mistress of your own actions."

"Me mistress of my own actions!" exclaimed she; "me go where I please!—what do ye mean? *How* can I go any where? Would you have me to go wading through the mire to visit any respectable person?"

"Certainly not, my dear!" said he; "but ye can take a fine day for your visits, when it is dry under foot."

"O you brute!" exclaimed the delicate Mrs Kerr, "when shall I teach you to know anything? When shall I get your ideas carried beyond your counter? Is it not disgraceful to see you trudge, trudging into the town every day, like some poor beggar that had to work for his bread?"

"Beggars dinna work, hinny," said he—"but do not be in a passion."

"Passion!" cried she; "I tell you what, Kerr—if you continue to disgrace me as you have done, I shall never set my foot upon the outside of your threshold again. Why don't you get a carriage?"

"A carriage!" he exclaimed, as though a thunderbolt had startled him in its flight.

"Yes! a carriage," she resumed—"I ask you, why don't you get one? Don't tell me you can't afford it. I know better."

"I cannot tell what ye know, love," said Mr Kerr; "but a carriage is out of the question."

"It is not out of the question," she resumed; "and question or no question, you must have one. Do you suppose I am to be kept here like a nun all my life?"

More conversation of a similar character passed between them; but it ended in this, that within two months Walter Kerr had a coachman, a carriage, and a pair of horses.

But in noticing the doings of the second Mrs Kerr, I have overlooked the situation of the children of poor Hannah. I have seen stepmothers who have been as kind to the children entrusted to their care—I have thought even more so—than if they had been their own. But such, the reader will already have imagined, was not the treatment of the children of Hannah Jerdan. Within twelve months from their father's marriage, they became subjected to daily, almost hourly scenes of cruel, petty, and capricious persecution.

But they endured their hard treatment and murmured not. In the society of each other they were happy—they spoke of their mother and wept. To Jacobini she was as a dream-mother—like the "dream-children" of poor matchless ELIA.

But Francis remembered his mother; and by that name he could never be brought to call her who had now taken her place, Mrs Kerr, indeed, though she had no children of her own, was wont to say—

"Don't let *the creatures* call me mother."

Time had passed on until Francis was a boy, or, perhaps, I should say a youth, of nearly fourteen, and Jacobini was approaching twelve. Now, it occurred, that, at the time I refer to, she had offended her stepmother, in what way I know not; but, according to the statement of the latter, it was an every-day offence—although Jacobini was a gentle child, docile as her mother was. But Mrs Kerr was in an evil humour, and, after having caused her favourite serving-maid to beat the child in her presence, not satisfied with the punishment she had received, she began to chastise her herself.

The cries of little Jacobini reached the ears of her brother, who was amusing himself in the garden. Although generally a quiet, he was a bold and passionate boy. He rushed towards the house—he burst into the room where his stepmother was gratifying her cruelty and hatred on his helpless sister—he rushed forward.

"Woman!" he cried, in the manner of one whose reason has left him, "if you strike my sister, I will strike you!"

"Boy!" she exclaimed, in a frenzy; and struck not only his sister again, but him too, and applied epithets to both, which, for the sake of human nature, it is as well not to repeat.

I have said that he was bold and passionate—he was also a tall and strong boy for his years. He grasped her more fiercely, and as she continued to vent her rage on both, and to strike at both, he dashed her to the floor, and exclaimed again—

"Woman! if you strike my sister, I will strike you!"

At that moment his father entered the house. Hysterics again came to plead the cause of Mrs Kerr. Walter had seen enough. He seized hold upon his son. He chastised him—unmercifully he did so; for he also, on occasions, was a man of violent passions; but, as with augmented rage he struck his son, the boy, while he submitted patiently to his chastisement, gazed in his face with a tearless and stern eye, and when he had exhausted his rage and strength, the boy turned on him and said—"Are you done, sir? I shall tell my mother this!—MY mother!"

When Walter Kerr heard the words—"I shall tell *my mother*," and especially the words—"MY mother"—pronounced by his son, and the emphatic manner in which they were pronounced, he trembled—his heart filled—he burst into tears, and, stretching out his hand, he said—"Francis!"

But the boy exclaimed—"No!" refused the offered hand, and rushed out of the room.

Throughout the day he was not again seen; and after many days of diligent search after him had been made, it was ascertained that he had entered on board of a foreign trading vessel from Newcastle. Twelve months passed, and the vessel again arrived in Newcastle; but the captain stated that the astonishing boy (as he termed Francis) had left him, he knew not for why, nor for where, while they were upon the coast of Africa, where many vessels were.

The tidings fell sadly on the heart of Walter Kerr; but he had other evils to contend with. He had lost his son; and with his villa, his grounds, his carriage, and his visiters, he had lost the half of his fortune. But the ambition of Mrs Kerr was not yet satisfied. Her husband did not possess landed property sufficient to think of being a Justice of the Peace for the county; yet she thought it would give her additional importance were he chief magistrate in the town of H——. I will not say that Mr Kerr had not a sprinkling of ambition in his composition himself, and he more readily agreed that he should aspire to the honour of being elevated to the bench, than to any other whim that she had proposed to him. Therefore, after bestowing the necessary and customary (though illegal) fees on the corporators, which made another fearful inroad on his monied property, Mr Kerr had the honour and gratification of being elected chief magistrate of the town of H——.

"Now," thought he, "Harriet will surely have reached the height of her ambition; she will be content now."

But he was mistaken. She not only discovered that the idea of a magistrate standing behind a counter, and working amongst bales of goods, or casks of sundry liquors, was intolerable, but she declared that the effluvia which he brought with him from his warehouse on his hands and garments, was quite as obnoxious as though she still lived over it. And further, she added, that you might as well attempt to wash the Ethiopian white as wash it away. It rendered her incapable of taking her dinner every day.

Once again, Walter Kerr gave way, "for the sake of peace." He gave a share in his business to a shopman who had been with him for many years, and became a sleeping partner himself. Jacobini was now a lovely girl of seventeen; but her persecution had increased with her years, until it became insupportable. She was treated not only as a servant but as a slave. Her father beheld what she endured, and he thought of the dying injunction of his Hannah, and sighed; but his interposition tended only to increase the sufferings which his daughter endured.

Jacobini possessed all the meekness and patience which had characterised her mother; but she was persecuted beyond their endurance. She tied up a few of her clothes, the plainest that she had, and with the little money which she had been enabled to gather together, she left her father's house at the dead of night, and, wandering towards the next town, took her journey to London, where, through the instrumentality of a friend of her mother's, she was in a few days hired as child's-maid to a merchant in the city.

Her gentle disposition and acquirements soon rendered her a favourite with the family; and when they ascertained her history, she became as one of them.

About this time there was a young man, one William Jerdan, came from India to be initiated in the mysteries of business by her master. It was soon evident that he was no uninterested beholder of the gentleness and beauty of Jacobini. There was, perhaps, something of the ardent temperament of the clime in which he was born in his composition; and he suddenly made a declaration of his affection with an enthusiasm which, while it perhaps pleased, at the same time intimidated the retiring and the timid Jacobini. She therefore listened not to his words, and sought to avoid him. But the more her reserve grew, and the more she endeavoured to shun his presence, the more earnest became his entreaties, and the more ardent his declarations of affection. Thus several months passed, and there was a whisper in her heart, that she could love him, that she *did* love him; but she endeavoured to conquer it. She had often corresponded with her brother, and given him an account of all that she had endured since the day of his departure. He was now commander of a large vessel trading between India and the States of America. She had written to him on the day after her arrival in London; and about eight months afterwards received from him the following letter. It was addressed to the care of the friend who had procured her the situation:

"*New York, August* 15*th*, 18—.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—I cannot describe to you what were my feelings on receiving your letter, which communicated to me the tidings that you also had been forced to flee from our father's house. It is perhaps sinful in me to do so, but I cannot avoid hating the woman whom our father would have us to call mother; not on account of her conduct to me (though it was cruel enough), for I always despised her—but, O Jacobini! it was because she was so unlike *our* mother, whom I remember better than you can, and whom I suppose you will now resemble as she lives in my memory —for all who saw you said, you 'were her picture;' but it is because of her cruelty to you that I hate her. The thought that you have been compelled to fly more than three hundred miles from our father's house, and that your only hope is becoming the servant of our equals! Sister, when I received your letter and read this, it cost me a sleepless night; I cried like a child—and sailors do not shed tears for trifles. Yea, though I am no Catholic, I prayed that *our* mother's spirit might watch over you and protect you, my sister! But I cannot endure the thought of your being a menial in the house of any one. With this, therefore, you will receive a draft for £100 upon the agents of my owners, payable at sight. The moment that you get it cashed, leave service, or I shall be angry.

"But now, my own sister, I have something else to tell you of. You know that our dear mother had a brother called James, and after whom you were named. He went to sea when but a boy, and was not again heard of. It was rumoured, and believed, that he and his shipmates were taken by pirates, and that they became a part of them. The story was not true. Eighteen months ago, I was in Bengal, and had dealings with a merchant, who, hearing the Scottish or rather the Border accent on my tongue, asked me from whence I came. I informed him; and he then, with a degree of curiosity, inquired who was my father, who my mother. When I spoke of our father—'I remember him well,' he said; 'Wat Kerr—why, he was my school and class-fellow!' But when I told him of our mother, and who she was, there was a visible paleness on his sun-burnt face; sweat stood in drops upon his brow, he gasped in his eagerness to hear me, and exclaimed—'Youth! youth! does your mother live?' 'Oh, no!' I answered; and the tears gushed into my eyes, sister. 'Come to me! come to me! my sister's child!' he cried, and he threw his arms around my neck. Jacobini, it was our uncle—our mother's brother. And when I had told him all, and how and why I had left the house, and spoke of you, and of your being named after him—'If I live,' said he, 'for two years more, I shall see my little niece, my namesake—she shall be my daughter. He had been many years a prisoner, and on obtaining his liberty became a sort of secretary to a nabob in India. He had written repeatedly to his parents; but he received no answer, for ere then they were dead; and his sister—our mother—he knew not whether she lived, where she was, or by what name she might be found. He is now a widower, and has an only son, nearly my age. Our cousin, Jacobini, is a noble, kind-hearted fellow. I should have loved him though he had been no relative of mine, from the moment I became acquainted with him. His name is William, and before this reaches you, he will be in London where you are; for, when I last left Bengal, he was preparing to go to London, to be thoroughly instructed in the rules of business. He was to be in the house of one Mr L——, in Throgmorton Street. By inquiring there, you will easily find him; and the moment you receive this, call upon him—he will rejoice in having found you—he will protect you until I see you, which will be in the course of next year; for, after again going to Bengal, I have a voyage to make to England; and our uncle has promised to accompany me. Therefore, within twelve months, we shall meet again. Remember me to my cousin when you find him, which you will easily do. You may shew him this letter; and when he has seen it, I am sure you will find in him a warm and a steadfast friend, and one who will not endure the degradation of your remaining an hour in a state of servitude.

"Farewell, dear and only sister, until we meet; and if you ever hear from our father, tell him that I yet live, that I think of him, and love him—but, O Jacobini! the *woman* that rules his house, renders it impossible that I can again enter it. Write to him that I shall meet him in London next year, but he must not bring *her*. Again, farewell, dear sister—wait upon our cousin with this letter; it will be an agreeable surprise—and I am, ever, your affectionate brother,

"FRANCIS KERR."

Such was the letter which Jacobini received from her brother. But it would be a vain task to describe her feelings, on its perusal. From it she found that her lover and cousin—he whom she *did* love, though she shewed it not, and whom she sought to avoid—was one and the same person. She was commanded to shew the letter to *him!*

"To *him!*" said Jacobini; "I cannot." And yet while she so said she wept with joy. She went not to him—nor needed she; for, as was his wont, within an hour he threw himself in her way—for he watched her every movement. She had never spoken to him unkindly (for it was not in her nature), but always coldly. She had the letter in her hand, and she was weeping over it when he saw her.

"Why does my Jacobini weep?" said he: "if aught distresses you, why refuse the friendship and the hand of one who is ready to bear your sorrows and protect you?"

"William," she said, falteringly—and it was the first time she had called him by that name—"read, read this." And she put the letter into his hands.

He took it—his eyes eagerly glanced over it; but before he had finished it, he flung his arms round her neck, and exclaimed—"My cousin!—my Jacobini!—mine!"

Her face fell upon his bosom, and she wept. Few words were spoken between them; but they understood each other. He took her hand in his, and still holding the letter, he led her to the room of her master and his mercantile instructor. They were both in tears as they approached him.

"Master William," said the merchant, with a look of surprise, "what's the meaning of this?"

William put the letter which his fair cousin had received into his hands. The merchant perused it.

"Miss Kerr," said he, "I am sorry that I was not sooner acquainted with your history. If you will, you shall still remain in my house, as a friend, but not as a menial. My opinion of your cousin William, though I say it before him, agrees with your brother's. Whatever his faults are, they belong to his head, not to his heart, and a little experience will correct them. I believe I have seen more between you, at least on his part, Jacobini, than your brother knows. But hitherto, while I discouraged, I was not displeased at the affection which I saw my young *protege* manifested towards you. And when my friend, your uncle and his father," (for he spoke to Jacobini), "arrives in England, I shall rejoice not only in being able to introduce to him his niece, but in recommending a daughter."

As the merchant spoke, William and Jacobini hung their heads, and tears and blushes were on their cheeks together.

She remained in the house; and I need hardly say, that her cousin now looked upon her as his betrothed; and in the same manner did she regard him.

Before twelve months went round, her brother and her uncle arrived in London. It would be a vain task in me to picture their interview—to describe their joy—to pourtray their surprise. The reader will imagine it more vividly. Why should I tell how the brother wept upon the neck of his sister, and how her tears fell on his bosom; or how the merchant drew her uncle aside, and in a few words told him the affection that existed between his son and his niece, and of the worth of both. Nor need I tell how James Jerdan, after listening to the merchant, came forward with a full heart, and in one hand taking the hand of his niece, and in the other that of his son, joined them, saying—"Bless my children!"

Within a month, the indissoluble knot was tied between William and Jacobini, and they went down to Scotland to spend their honeymoon, her brother accompanying them; but her father-in-law refused to go with them, as he thought his presence might not be acceptable to her who was now the wife of his late sister's husband.

Jacobini had never heard from her father, though she had often written to him, since she left his house. But from the day that she departed, ruin had followed fast upon him. When he left his business, because his wife was ashamed of it, business became ashamed of him. Her extravagance increased, and his property decreased. His villa, his carriage, his all that never should have belonged to him, became a jest among his neighbours. He was declared a bankrupt

—he was cast into prison. The villa and the surrounding grounds were sold, the carriage was sold, and his wife went to reside with her father, who was then upon his death-bed.

When Jacobini, her husband, and her brother, arrived in H——, they found their father a captive in a prison-house. They entered the prison to see him; and when he beheld them, he knew only his daughter. But they all, they each embraced him; they called him "FATHER!" and the poor man wept, even as a child weeps. He spoke of their mother—he entreated their forgiveness; but his son and his daughter clung around his neck, and cried—"Say nothing, father!"

They sent for his solicitor. His son and his son-in-law paid his debts in the prison. They led him out in their arms. They sent for his wife, the gay Miss Scott, that was their cruel stepmother; her father had died about a week before, and she was left destitute, having ruined her husband.

"I will support my father," said Francis; "but I will have nothing to do with maintaining *that woman*"—for she had been sent for against his wish.

"Then I will support her," said Jacobini—"William, will not you?" she added, addressing her husband. "Let bygones be bygones—she is my father's wife—she must have cared for me before I could have cared for myself."

"Yes, love, yes, we will support her," said her husband.

They did as they had said. Walter Kerr lived in comfort on an annuity which his children allowed him; and his wife, while she partook of it, repented because of her extravagance, and because of her cruelty to those from whose bounty she was now fed. Jacobini went with her husband and her father-in-law to India, where in a few years a happy family gamboled around them, and Francis increased in wealth, but lived a bachelor, and left his property to his sister's children.

THE DISSOLVED PLEDGE.

"HOLD hard!" said the coachman, as he gathered up his reins, and flourished his whip—and away lumbered the heavy afternoon coach, for the South, from the door of the coach office. It was full inside, with only one outside passenger. After it was fairly out of the town, and the road had become comparatively clear of carts and carriages, the coachman, after two or three quiet, reconnoitering glances at the gentleman who occupied the box-seat, tucked the apron comfortably over his knees, and having settled himself to his own satisfaction, began to weary of so long a silence, and endeavoured to break the spell by the novel and interesting remark—"It's a fine afternoon, sir."

"Yes."

A long pause.

"Fine horses these, sir."

"Yes."

Another long pause.

"Queer fish this," muttered the coachman to himself. "I wonder if he can say No. I'll try him once more. Take snuff, sir?" said he, thrusting the mull under the nose of his victim.

"No, I thank you," followed by an impatient rustling of his cloak, and a restless movement on the seat.

The coachman gave up the matter in despair, and was obliged to content himself with holding agreeable converse with his cattle, in which he certainly had the best of it, as they bore all he chose to inflict, in silence.

The man of few words was a youth of one or two-and-twenty, of pleasing and gentlemanly exterior; and, although the *coachman* looked with great contempt upon one who would not take snuff, and who did not admire his favourite horses, we hope he will prove an object of greater interest to our readers, as he is to be the hero of our story. Poor fellow! no wonder that he wore such an air of sadness and abstraction, and that he shrank from the well-meant, though obtrusive advances of the knight of the whip. Most of us have experienced—and who that has experienced can ever forget?—the feelings of mingled sorrow and hope with which we have, for the first time in our lives, turned our backs upon the home of our childhood, and were fairly launched, on our own responsibility, into the untried ocean of life. How fondly did our thoughts rest upon the much-loved scenes we were leaving behind us! how vividly did we recall each look and action of those nearest and dearest to our hearts! and how perseveringly did we cling to our sorrowful yet pleasing recollections, shutting our eyes and ears to the vulgar sights and sounds of every-day life around us, and shrinking from communication with our fellow-men, as if our sorrow were "a thing apart," too sacred to be unveiled to the eyes of others. Such were the feelings of young Edward Malcolmson, our silent friend. *He* was leaving, for the first time, a mother he tenderly loved, sisters who doted on him, and, last, though not least, he was leaving one who was dearer to him than them all—one whom he *then* thought, as most of us have thought once in our lives, he would never, never forget—the joy of his heart, the light of his eyes (as the poets word it), his first, his only love. No wonder, then, that he flapped his travelling cap down over his ears, folded his arms on his breast, and, fixing his eyes upon the footboard, sat the very image of determination—to be miserable. Night was closing around, but the darkness was congenial to his feelings; he could now indulge them unobserved, and he abandoned himself to them without control. He felt the same kind of listlessness and prostration of mental energy which those experience who suffer from sea-sickness; so much so that when a sudden gust of wind whisked his cap off his head, he was too completely victimised even to mention his loss to the coachman.—"Let it go! What do I care? O Jessy!" The latter part of this effusion he unconsciously uttered aloud.

"That's the name of my near wheeler, sir," said the coachman, glad to hear dummy speak at last, and still more delighted to have an opportunity of hearing *himself*. What a strange mixture of inconsistencies is the creature man! This ludicrous and unexpected appropriation of his beloved one's name, tickled Edward Malcolmson's fancy; and he who the moment before had thought himself the most miserable dog in existence, burst into an extravagant fit of laughter. The coachman was delighted with the success of his random remark; and it was with a chuckle of unaffected, kind-hearted pleasure, that he exclaimed—

"It does my heart guid to hear ye laugh. Naething like it, sir, for keeping a body gaucie an' comfortable."

The ice was broken; the conversation was kept up for some time—at first only in monosyllables, on Edward's part; but he could not long resist the contagion of the man's persevering merriment, and he gradually shook off the weight which had before almost overpowered his spirit. Sorrow gave way to hope for the future, and, with all the sanguine buoyancy of youth, he already, in fancy, began business for himself, in an extensive way, as a builder—of castles in the air. Those castles in the air, those bubbles of fancy, how soon do they crumble away, and burst amid the jostling realities of life! How soon are our eyes opened to their hollowness and vanity! The visions of early hope are like the rainbow—bright and beautiful it appears before us, spanning half the heavens with its brilliant arch, and fading even while we gaze upon it. Fleeting, yet delightful dreamings of fancy! whither have ye fled? Gone, with the buoyant spirits and unchilled affections of youth; and we, the seared and world-hardened, sigh when we look back to you, to think that ye have proved to be but delusions. But a truce to sentiment; it is time that we should introduce our hero to our readers, to do which satisfactorily, we must glance backwards to a period some thirty years anterior to the date of our story, and give some account of his parents.—Mrs Malcolmson was the widow of a substantial tradesman in Edinburgh, who had been dead for some years, having left her in tolerably comfortably circumstances, with two daughters and one son, the Edward of our story. She was a woman of manners and education far superior to her husband's station in life—the only daughter of an Irish family of distinction, in the neighbourhood of Cork, and moving in the first circles there. She had been attracted by the personal appearance and agreeable manners of a young subaltern in a regiment quartered in that city. Philip Denby was a man well calculated to catch the fancy of a young and romantic girl. To great personal attractions, he united the most polished, yet unaffected manners; was highly accomplished, and was blessed, moreover, with an excellent disposition. But, with all these advantages, young Denby had one drawback—a drawback of no slight importance in the eyes of worldly-minded mammas, and of their prudent daughters—he was poor. They were all loud in his praise—so elegant, so delightful, so interesting! They all agreed in thinking that no man dressed better, made a more *distingué* figure in a ball-room, or a more agreeable one in general society; but then, poor fellow, what would all that do for him?—he had nothing but his pay to depend upon. The consequence was, that, though the "admired of all admirers," the young subaltern was looked upon as a "detrimental;" and the mammas, while they were eager to have so handsome an *officer* to grace their parties, were unwearying in their warnings and admonitions to their daughters, to beware of any serious entanglement with so poor a *man*. In general, these hints were not thrown away; but there was one, and she was the best and loveliest of the circle, who turned a deaf ear to them all. She listened only to the whisperings of her own heart, which told her that Philip Denby, poor in purse, was rich in all the qualities which adorn a man. Philip had long admired Ellen O'Connor, but as he would have admired a star in the distant sky—so great was the disparity which, to his sensitive mind, there appeared to be between their respective stations in life. She was the beautiful and only child of rich and purse-proud parents, and entitled to look forward to an alliance with the rich and high-born; while he, though a gentleman by birth, and so far her equal, had nothing but his profession to depend upon. Hitherto he had escaped, "fancy free," from all the dangers which surrounded him in the shape of bright eyes and beautiful forms; he felt flattered by the attentions which were everywhere paid him by the young and fair; but the very general popularity he enjoyed, was the best safeguard of his heart; all smiled upon him, and he in return smiled upon all, without feeling particular regard for any. He had come to the magnanimous resolution, that he was too poor to marry a poor woman, and too proud to marry a rich one—and he was in a fair way to become a regular male flirt, when he first met Ellen O'Connor. We will not attempt to enter into a description of Miss O'Connor's beauty, particularly as it lay more in expression than in feature; such as it was, however, all Philip's philosophy sank before it, like snow before a sunbeam. We shall merely remark, that she had eyes dark as her raven hair, with the light of a bright, and joyous, and confiding spirit flashing through them; the rest we leave to the imagination of our readers—for

"Who has not felt how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray?"

Our limits will not allow us to enter into particulars. If this were a novel, instead of a tale of real life, we might follow the course of their love, step by step, and expatiate upon the stolen glances, the tender *tête-à-têtes,* and all the sentimental etceteras which usually form the burden of a tale of love—fortunately for our readers, we must, per force, spare them the infliction. Suffice it, that their mutual attachment soon became the subject of common remark and conversation; and, at last, those who were most interested, and, as usual, most blind, were enlightened by the hints and charitable warnings of sundry busy, good-natured friends. Dire was the wrath of old O'Connor, when his eyes were opened to the truth: he cursed his own blind folly, for having allowed matters to go so far; cursed (but not aloud, he was too prudent for that) the wife of his bosom, for having been as blind as himself; and cursed every red coat that ever was made, and every unfortunate wight who had ever worn one. At length he remembered the legitimate object of his wrath, and hastened out of the house in search of Denby. Fortunately for them both—for Philip was not a man to bear unmerited abuse with patience—he failed in his object; Philip was not to be found at his lodgings, at the reading rooms, or at the billiard-table, for the best of all reasons—that he was seated beside Ellen O'Connor, not five minutes after her father had left her. While the one was leaving the house in one direction, the other was arriving at it by another. Philip found her in tears; and, in answer to his impassioned and alarmed inquiries, she gave him an account of the scene she had just witnessed, and implored him, if he had any affection for her, to bear patiently the intemperance which, she feared, her father would indulge in if they should meet. He calmed her fears on that score, and they had a long and interesting conversation, the result of which was, the conviction that it was impossible for them to live without each other. What arguments the philosopher, Denby, made use of, we know not; but the result was, that, in three days, Ellen O'Connor eloped from her father's house in his company. Some weeks passed gaily and happily over the heads of the young couple; but they were soon awakened from their dream of love and bliss, by the sterner realities of life. The story of old O'Connor's aversion to the match, and his loud and angry invectives against his daughter, had gone abroad, and Philip's creditors became pressing in their demands for payment. Ruin stared them in the face; and Ellen, whose fear of meeting her justly-incensed father had hitherto prevented her from seeking his forgiveness, was determined to brave the interview she dreaded. With a faltering step she sought her father's dwelling; and her heart smote her, when she thought how happy that home had been, till she introduced sorrow and disappointment there. The house was shut up—the family had left it in charge of a single servant, who delivered to Ellen a letter that had been left for her by her father, in case of her return. It contained merely the following words:—"Ungrateful girl! As you have sown so must you reap: you are an outcast from my home and heart for ever! Never presume to approach this house again." With eyes blinded with tears, and a heart swelling with anguish, she returned to her husband, who was anxiously awaiting the result of her visit.

"Well, dearest?" said he.

"He has rejected me for ever, Philip!" sobbed she, as she threw herself into his arms.

"Grieve not, my love!" said Denby, while his anxious look and heavy sigh betrayed how much he himself needed consolation—"are we not all in all to each other?" And, as he embraced his young and lovely wife, he forgot, for a moment, the world and all its cares. By the sale of his commission, he contrived to raise money enough to pay his trifling debts, and to support himself and his wife for some months in strict economy; but that temporary supply diminishing rapidly, he was obliged to apply to some of his numerous friends to exert their interest, or open their purses in his favour. Disappointment followed all his aplications; and, harrassed in mind and wearied in body, he lay down on the bed of sickness and sorrow, from which he never rose again. He just lived long enough to see and bless his newly-born infant, leaving his wife to struggle with poverty and grief. Mrs Denby's sorrow was at first excessive; and serious fears were, for some time, entertained by her medical man, for her life; but youth and a good constitution carried her through. She was a woman of warm and passionate feelings, and her grief soon exhausted itself by its violence. Besides, it is one of the blessings of poverty, that it allows no time for brooding over sorrow, but calls for active and constant exertion, to ward off the evils it entails. In her distress—for she was left almost destitute—she again applied to her father; but he continued inexorable, and sternly refused to see her. His example was followed by the rest of her family connections, all of whom were, or affected to be, indignant at her conduct. A maternal uncle, however, pitying her destitution, promised to settle a small annuity upon her, and to bring up and provide for her infant son, on condition that she would never interfere with his education, and would leave the country within six months.

Severe as these conditions were, she at last agreed to them, though to do so cost her many a bitter tear; but, when she thought of her own destitute condition, and of the brighter prospects which the proposed arrangement would open to her son, she struggled to suppress the fond yearnings of a mother's affection, and to close with an offer which she hoped would be for her boy's future benefit. It was with an agonised heart she tore herself from her little Philip, whose uncle received him with the greatest delight, and solemnly promised to be to him as a father. She then bade adieu for ever to her native land, after having again ineffectually endeavoured to obtain her father's forgiveness. In two years' time, she was again a wife and a mother. Mr Malcolmson, a respectable Scottish tradesman, when on a visit to some friends in Cork, had accidentally seen the young widow, at the time when her late bereavement, and her family's cruel rejection of her, excited universal sympathy and commiseration; and when he afterwards met her in Edinburgh, where she was living in humble seclusion, he contrived to form her acquaintance; and, in a few months, made her a formal offer of his hand and fortune. Mrs Denby received his addresses with graceful and grateful acknowledgments; but told him that she had no heart to bestow, that her affections were buried in the grave with her husband, and that she could never love another. "If you cannot *love* me as your husband," replied he, "you may respect and esteem me—you may look upon me as your friend, your guardian, your protector—as one whose pride and pleasure it will be to anticipate all your desires, and to shield you from all annoyances." In her union with the worthy and amiable Malcolmson, Ellen Denby was blessed with a recompense for all her past distresses: for ten years he was to her the kindest of husbands, the most affectionate of friends; and the only unhappy moment she experienced during her union, was that on which it was about to be dissolved for ever. He left her comfortably provided for, with three children—two girls, and a boy, the hero of our tale. Edward Malcolmson, at the time of his father's death, was a boy of excellent dispositions; and, as he grew up, he amply fulfilled the promise of his childhood. He was a young man of solid rather than brilliant talents; mild and gentlemanly in his manners; slow to form plans, but persevering and determined in following them out. He had received a medical education, and had distinguished himself by his close application to his studies, and by his rapid progress in professional acquirements. Through the interest of some of his late father's friends, he had obtained an appointment on the Bengal establishment; and was, at the time of the commencement of our story, on his way to London, there to join the ship that was to convey him abroad. Mrs Malcolmson's nearest neighbour in Edinburgh, was a widow lady, named Martin, who, like herself, was living in comfortable, though not affluent circumstances. Her only daughter, Jessie, was her mother's darling, and well deserved the affection which was lavished upon her. She was about the same age as Edward Malcolmson, and, without being absolutely lovely, there was a charm in her simple, unaffected manners, and in the ingenuous expression of her countenance, which, added to an uncommonly fine figure and sweet voice, gave her the advantage over others who far excelled her in mere beauty of feature. Between her mother and Mrs Malcolmson, the closest intimacy had existed for several years; indeed, they had lived so secludedly, that they had hardly any acquaintances beyond the circle of their own families. The consequence was, that the young people were almost constantly in each other's society; and their parents remarked, with pleasure, the mutual attachment which seemed to be springing up between them. They did, indeed, feel a warmer regard for each other than is often the result of such constant and close intimacy; for it is but too often the case with human character as it is with the face of nature—" 'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view." But it was not till the time of Edward's departure approached, that they became mutually aware how dear they were to each other. The morning before leaving Edinburgh, young Malcolmson called to bid adieu to his friends. Mrs Martin happened to be out walking, and Jessie was sitting alone in the parlour, when Edward was ushered in. She turned pale when she saw him; for her heart sunk at the prospect of their approaching separation.

"Jessie," said he, after they had sat in silence some minutes, "I have come to bid you farewell."

"I feared so," said she, striving in vain to repress her tears.

"Do not—do not cry, dear Jessie," exclaimed he, starting up, and seizing her hand, while his own eyes were dimmed with tears—"I cannot bear to witness your distress."

"Would you have me look happy and cheerful, when my old friend and companion is going to leave me, perhaps never to return?"

"Companion, Jessie! friend!—these are cold words to me, whose whole heart is yours; who live but in the light of your smile; who love you as I have never before loved human being, and never shall love again. Jessie! dear Jessie! tell me that I do not love in vain; give me one word of hope to cheer me during my painful absence. Will you not answer, dearest?"

She turned her tearful eye up to his face, and then, hiding her blushing cheek upon his arm, she murmured—

"What would you have me say, Edward? We have been dearer to each other than brother and sister; we have been dreaming a pleasant dream, and now we are awakening from it; we are about to part, perhaps never to meet again."

"Oh, yes, dearest! we shall meet again. The world is all before me, and I have youth and energy to carry me through it. Only tell me that, if fortune favours my exertions, you will smile upon me; and the hope of one day calling you mine, will cheer me under misfortune, and encourage me to renewed efforts. Only tell me that you will not forget me, and I here vow, as soon as I have obtained a competency, to return and claim you for my bride."

"Make no rash promises, Edward! We are both young, and have neither of us seen much of the world, or of others. You know what your favourite song says—

> 'Change o' fowk and change o' scene
> May gar thy fancy jee.'"

"Never, Jessie, never!"

But we will not weary our readers with any more of this easily imagined effusion. They parted under a mutual agreement of fidelity to each other: how well they adhered to it remains to be shewn.

We will not follow Edward Malcolmson on ship-board, nor attempt to describe that most uninteresting of all uninteresting things, a *pleasant* passage; but will merely state that he arrived in safety at Calcutta, where he soon rendered himself conspicuous by his active discharge of the duties imposed upon him. His zeal and talent attracted the notice of the ruling powers, and he obtained a lucrative appointment at the Presidency, the salary of which, added to the liberal fees he received in private practice, soon enabled him to clear off the debts he had unavoidably contracted at his outset, and to lay the foundation of a rapidly increasing fortune. The habits of his previous life rendered it an easy task for him to unite the most careful economy with a liberal and gentlemanly expenditure. He had been early taught that true economy consists in restraining our desire for the *superfluities*, not in debarring ourselves from the enjoyment of the *comforts* of life. His careful regulation of his expenses, and his indifference to show and parade enabled him, on proper occasions, to give greater scope to the natural generosity of his disposition than he otherwise could have done. Esteemed for the steadiness and consistency of his character, and beloved for his kind and amiable qualities, he soon became one of the most popular men of his class in Calcutta, besides having deservedly acquired the reputation of being one of the most skilful. Fortune had thus far favoured him beyond his most sanguine expectations; and, in so expressing ourselves, we do no injustice to his merits; for how often are the most splendid talents lost to the world, even when seconded by persevering energy, for want of opportunity for their display? At a comparatively early age, he had nearly attained the summit of his profession; he had far outstripped those who had started with him in the race for wealth and distinction; he was generally and deservedly beloved and respected—and yet he was not happy. "Change o' fowk, and change o' scene," *had* made a great alteration in those feelings which, with the fond enthusiasm of youth, he had thought would remain unshaken for ever; and the recollection of his engagement to Jessie Martin, which was once his greatest solace, now hung like a cloud over his spirits. For two or three years, her image had been ever present to his thoughts, and had formed his principal incentive to exertion; but Time had been gradually dimming his memory of the past. He began almost unconsciously to regret having so inconsiderately shackled the freedom of his inclinations, and, when he gazed on the many lovely forms around him, he wished he had followed Jessie's advice, not to bind himself by a formal promise, until he had seen more of the world and of the people in it. The engagement had been made, however, and true to his principles, he was determined to adhere to it, although, to do so, he was obliged resolutely and firmly to avoid the society of one who had begun to usurp Jessie's place in his affections. He had written home from time to time, giving a full account at first of his flattering prospects, and of the hope that cheered him on in his path; and now, after a lapse of eight years since his arrival in India, he wrote to say that fortune had so far favoured him, that he considered himself justified in thinking of making a change in his condition. He told not of his cool and altered feelings—he considered it his duty to conceal them, and to adhere to his engagement, even at the sacrifice of his happiness; and he wrote to claim the fulfilment of Jessie's promise, and to beg her, if her feelings remained the same towards him, to come out to him by the first opportunity. Time had been busy also with Jessie. Long separation had gradually weakened her affection for Edward; and a freer intercourse with the world and with society, had produced its natural effect—a love of change and variety. She had been much and generally admired, and, although very guarded in her behaviour, and cool and distant in her manners to the young men who flocked around her, had received several very advantageous offers, which she had instantly and decidedly rejected, as she considered herself in honour bound to adhere to her early engagement. Her feelings towards Edward had, however, lost their freshness and warmth, and had gradually acquired a tone of indifference; and although she had formed no other particular attachment, she grieved to think that she could not participate in the constancy of affection which *seemed* to pervade his letters to her. Thus were they mutually deceived, and each looked forward with anxiety and alarm to the period of their meeting, which was now not far distant, as Jessie had received Edward's invitation, and had announced her intention of taking her passage in the *Lady Flora* which was shortly to sail for Calcutta. It was with but little of the joy of a bride-expectant, that she began her preparations for her voyage; for she was conscious that she had none of that feeling of devoted attachment to her betrothed which a woman ought to have towards the man whom she is to vow at the altar, to "love honour, and obey."

We must leave her to complete her arrangements, and recall the readers' attention to one who must, by this time, we fear, almost have escaped from their recollection—young Philip Denby, whom we left in Ireland, under the guardianship of his uncle. The lovely child had grown up a handsome and promising youth, and had endeared himself to his uncle by his grateful and affectionate disposition. He had received all the advantages which wealth and liberality could bestow, and, though avowedly the intended heir to his uncle's handsome fortune, had been brought up in the strictest habits of business and regularity. His gay, light-hearted, joyousness of spirit, his frank and engaging manners—had made him a general favourite; but, fortunately for him, he had been taught to regulate his conduct by strict principle, and he always kept in mind that the best mode of retaining the good opinion of others, is by continuing to deserve it. He was not, as is too often the case, spoiled by the attention he met with; but it had, on the contrary, the good effect of stimulating him to persevere in the path of duty. He knew nothing of his mother but by the letters which she periodically wrote to inquire after his welfare, and often and deeply did he lament the family feud which separated them; but he had, from his earliest years, looked upon his uncle as a father, and was obliged, in duty, to conform to his prejudices. Old O'Connor never forgot nor forgave his daughter's indiscretion. He had been proud of her—proud of her beauty and of her accomplishments—and had looked forward with delight to the prospect of one so favoured by nature and fortune forming a brilliant alliance; for, like most men with little minds and long purses, he sighed for what wealth alone could not bestow—good family connection. In this dearest hope of his heart, she had disappointed him; and his wounded pride had converted what little affection he once had had for her, into the bitterest enmity. This feeling extended even to his innocent grandson, whom he refused on all occasions to notice, remarking that an "ill bird must have an ill brood." But we will say no more of him or his prejudices: such feelings are as monstrous and unnatural, as, fortunately, they are rare. Mr Morton, Philip's uncle, had made his fortune in the East Indies, and had still an interest in a large mercantile house in Calcutta, which place he had twice visited during his protegé's school days, and while he was pursuing his studies at college, under the surveillance of an old and esteemed friend. It was Mr Morton's intention once more to visit the East; but a severe attack of illness had shattered his constitution, and obliged him to give up all hopes of prosecuting his intention. Philip had attained the age of two-and-thirty, when alarming accounts were received of the instability of several of the great commercial houses in India. This news excited old Morton's fears; and his anxiety on the subject had a fatal effect upon his nerves, shaken and debilitated by previous illness. He felt that he had not long to live, and, in expectation of approaching dissolution, he made his will, by which he left all he was possessed of to Philip, on condition that he took the name of Morton. He earnestly enjoined Philip to hasten to Calcutta, and, as his representative, to assist, to the utmost of his ability, the house with which he was connected, in the distress which he foresaw was impending over it. Before Philip could prepare to comply with his wishes, however, the old man became so alarmingly ill that his life was despaired of, and, though he rallied wonderfully for a time, a relapse, brought on by incautious exposure to the air, proved fatal, and Philip was left a second time fatherless. Sadly and sincerely did he mourn the loss of his affectionate and liberal protector—his earliest, his kindest, his constant friend. As soon as circumstances would allow, he hastened to fulfil his deceased uncle's wishes, and, crossing the Channel, after a rapid equipment for his voyage, he hurried down to Portsmouth to join a ship on the point of sailing for Calcutta. The passengers were all on board, and the vessel was only waiting for a fair wind to proceed to sea. Two days afterwards, they were dashing along down Channel, with a favourable wind, with a bright sky over their heads, and with the cheering hope of a good passage. The animated and novel scene excited Philip's admiration, and cheered his spirits. The bright and beautiful face of Nature, under an aspect so new to him; the sunbeams glancing from the crested waves; the white foam breaking under the vessel's bow; the exhilarating sense of rapid motion, as the water hissed and rustled alongside; the rapidly-receding landmarks on the shore; and the joyous faces of the crew—all conspired to distract his thoughts for a while from the grief which had weighed down his spirits. Several of the gentlemen passengers were on deck, enjoying the beauty of the scene; but none of the ladies, of whom he heard there were three or four on board, had yet made their appearance. At eight o'clock, the steward announced, "Spirits on the table, sir;" but Philip heeded him not. Now that the first excitement of novelty was over, his thoughts reverted to the home he had so lately left, and to the dear and valued benefactor he should never see again; and he leaned sorrowfully over the gangway, to indulge his mournful retrospections. From these reveries he was soon roused, by the sound of suppressed voices close to him; and, on turning round to see whence it proceeded, he perceived, through the dim light, the figures of two of the crew stretched at full length on the deck, close to the foremost quarter-deck carronade, and under the lee of the bulwark. Now that his attention was awakened, he could distinctly hear every word of their conversation, which amused and interested him greatly, and which he considered himself perfectly justified in benefiting by, as he had given them fair warning of his proximity, by observing to them, "It's a fine night, lads"—and receiving the answer, "Yes, sir, it is."

"My eyes, Bill!" said one of the recumbents, "aint this here a fine breeze?"

"Wait till ye sees the end on't, Jem," replied the other; "it's my notion ye'll change your tune before long."

"Mayhap I may, Bill; but I hates to be watching the weather-glass of evil. What makes you so down in the mouth?"

"I'll tell ye what, Jem—I don't like this here move at all. I never seed no good come of sailing on a Friday. Why couldn't the skipper have kept her fast by the nose for another day, 'stead of running in the very teeth of mischief in this way? I wonders as how the Admiralty doesn't give an order agin sailing on sich an unlucky day."

"Why, sure, Bill, you don't call sich a breeze as this unlucky? If this is what you call Friday's luck, I hope I may always sail on a Friday."

"Well, we'll see, Jem; but, if so be as you doesn't think that there's bad luck in a Friday, you're out of your latitude, that's all."

"Watch, man the royal cluelines!" interrupted the men in their confab, and startled all the watch to their feet. The breeze was gradually freshening, and the small masts were beginning to complain; but the night was clear, and cold, and beautiful—and Philip retired to his cot, laughing at the superstitious fears of the sailor, but, at the same time, unconsciously almost to himself, affected by them. The breeze continued steady till they had cleared the Channel, and were standing to the south, when it began gradually to die away and draw a-head; and, on the night of the third day from their departure, the scene was completely changed. Thick, heavy masses of cloud had been gathering to the southward all the afternoon; cloud after cloud rearing its dark head, and then remaining stationary, like an army assembling all its forces before being put in motion. Towards night, the breeze began to freshen from the southward, and the clouds to rise slowly and sullenly, as if compelled unwillingly to tear themselves from their resting-place on the horizon, while the light "scud" drove rapidly across, high up in the heavens. A large, dull halo surrounded the moon, and her light struggled dimly and ominously through the watery and angry-looking vapours that flitted across it. Everything portended a coming storm; the ship herself seemed to be aware of the approaching conflict, plunging and rolling as if in ineffectual efforts to make her escape; while her timbers groaned and creaked, as she tossed about in the confused sea, and seemed to utter mournful cries, as the wind moaned in hollow gusts through her rigging. All the small sails were taken in, and soon the loud order to "reef topsails" was heard, followed by the rattling of blocks, the flapping of sails, and the loud cheers of the sailors, as they plied their dangerous trade aloft. The double-reefed topsails were soon set, the yards braced sharp up, and the ship stood away to the westward, throwing thick sprays over her bow, and trembling from stem to stern, as she plunged heavily into the sea, and, rising again, poured whole torrents of water from her head. Philip felt an excitement he had never before experienced, as he gazed on the scene around him. The wild, threatening sky; the angry waves, like wild beasts lashing themselves into fury; the gradually-freshening gale, howling as if in search of its prey; and the moon herself—the mild, placid moon—scowling down upon the turmoil below, with a frown upon her brow—all united to form a picture of gloom and desolation, which accorded well with his own feelings. He stayed on deck till near the end of the first watch, and was just going down to his cabin, when the second mate, whose watch it was, said to him—

"You must be cold and wet, Mr Morton. If you will wait a few minutes, till I am relieved, I shall be glad of your company in my cabin, to smoke a cigar over a glass of grog, for it is of little use turning in. This night's work is not over yet, or I'm much mistaken."

"Thank you," replied Morton; "I shall be happy to join you."

As soon as the deck was relieved, they dived below, to the snugly fitted-up cabin of the second mate, where they soon forgot the clouds above, while enveloped in clouds of their own raising below.

"It is the fashion, Mr Morton," said Hardy, the officer, "among many of the sticklers for propriety, to rail at the use of what they have no relish for themselves, and to denounce smoking as a low and ungentlemanly practice; but, in spite of all their squeamish objections, I know nothing more soothing and refreshing, after a night of toil and excitement like this, than a mild and genuine Havannah. Surely Nature would not be so lavish of her blessings, if it had not been intended that we were to enjoy them in moderation.

"Ah! I thought so—no rest for the wicked," continued he, starting up, as the shrill pipe of the boatswain rose far above the noise of the storm; "there it is! 'All hands down top-gallant masts and yards!' Finish your cigar, Mr Morton, and douce the glim when you have done. I must be off."

"I will go, too," said Morton; "I am too much excited to sleep."

The night was now pitch dark, the wind had increased to a strong gale, and the ship was rolling "gunnels to," in the long heavy sea; bright flashes of lightning, every now and then, threw a momentary glare over the gloomy heavens, and the thunder rolled in loud and long-continued peals.

"Didn't I tell you, Jem, what 'ud come of sailing on a Friday? and we haven't seen the end on't yet," said Bill Halliday, one of the men we before mentioned, as he was running up the main rigging, and a flash of lightning shewed him his messmate beside him.

"Oh, never say 'die,' while there's a shot in the locker, Bill; we'll weather many a Friday's sailing yet."

Just then the ship gave a heavy lurch to windward; Jem heard a loud and startling cry close beside him, and, looking downwards through the darkness, a sudden flash shewed him his messmate struggling for life on the surface of the water; he had slipped his foot, poor fellow, and, amid the roar of the waters and the howling of the gale, the noise of his plunge was unheard by those on deck. His messmate, trembling with horror, raised the cry of "A man overboard!" but, alas! in vain; in such a night and such a sea, it would have been madness to risk the lives of the many for the one. The next flash lighted the sea far and near, and all eyes were anxiously bent upon the water; but nothing was visible but the dark heaving mass, with the white foam driving over its surface; the ravenous waves had done their work quickly and mercifully.

Soon after this, as if satisfied with this sacrifice to its fury, the gale began gradually to moderate; and, before next night, the ship was again "all a-taunto," and standing to the southward, with a leading wind, under single-reefed topsails, and topgallantsails. The following day, the weather was so fine, and the water so smooth, that the ladies, who had not hitherto ventured out of their cabins, made their appearance at the cuddy table. At dinner, Morton was seated nearly opposite to a remarkably fine *turkey*, and his eyes were constantly wandering in that direction, but whether for the purpose of admiring *its* beauties, or those of a young lady seated behind it, it was difficult to distinguish. His contemplation however, either of the dead or the living beauty, seemed to have diverted his thoughts from the indulgence of his appetite.

"Mr Morton, a glass of wine?" said the captain; "you seem to be contented with *looking* at that fine turkey."

"Beautiful creature!" replied he.

"Won't you send your plate over for some of it?"

"With all my heart," sighed he, looking most languishingly in the direction of the turkey.

"Why, Mr Morton," said Hardy, "you said before dinner that you had an excellent appetite; you are not giving proof of it now—I am afraid you are not well."

Morton coloured to the eyes, and gave a faint laugh. The fact was, that he was *not* well; he had just been seized with a violent attack of a rather uncommon complaint, called "love at first sight." He felt confused, he scarcely knew why, and he fancied everybody was noticing his confusion, which made him ten times worse. He laughed when he ought to have looked grave, and looked grave when he ought to have laughed, and was guilty of a thousand awkwardnesses, which attracted towards him the observation he wished to avoid. He strove manfully to look up the table, and down the table, and in every direction but that in which he wished to look; but his eyes would, somehow or another, have their own way in spite of him, and always contrived, at last, as naturally as possible, to direct their glances towards the neighbourhood of the turkey. It was with a feeling of positive relief he saw the ladies retire from the table; and no sooner were they gone than he became a rational man again, though rather more abstracted and silent than he had been before dinner."

"That was rather a nice-looking girl sitting opposite to me at dinner," remarked he, hesitatingly and inquiringly, to his friend Hardy, after they rose from table. "Do you know who she is?"

"I have heard her name, but I forget it just now," said the sailor; "but she is a devilish fine woman; I wonder the captain did not introduce you to her."

"Why, so he did; but he spoke so indistinctly that I could not catch the name."

At one bell in the second dog-watch (half-past six), the band made their appearance on deck; and no sooner were the lively strains of the music heard, than the ship's company, always ready for "a lark," came swarming up the hatchways, and the decks soon resounded with the sounds of the "fantastic," but anything but "light" toe.

"Come, gentlemen," said Captain Dickens to his passengers, "won't you follow the good example the men are setting you? Can't you persuade the ladies to dance? Mr Morton, here is a fair lady for you to try your powers of persuasion upon," looking at one who was walking beside him, and who made a movement of assent in reply to Morton's bow.

It was the fair one who had attracted so much of his attention at dinner. As the captain resigned her to his charge, Morton blushed, and stammered, and wished himself a hundred miles off, although he was in the very situation which, a few minutes before, he thought he could give worlds to occupy. What fools does love make of wise men! At last, the preliminaries were satisfactorily arranged, and the dance commenced; and, before its conclusion, the partners were mutually pleased with each other.

"Well, Mr Morton," said the captain, "I hope you enjoyed your dance?"

"Very much indeed," replied he; "I hope you do not feel fatigued, Miss Martyr."

"Miss who?" said the captain, laughing; "you are surely not going to make a *martyr* of your partner."

"If I have made a mistake, Captain Dickens, you ought to make the *amende honorable* for me, for you spoke so indistinctly that I misunderstood you."

"I shall be happy to make the only reparation in my power, by re-introducing you clearly and distinctly to Miss Martin."

Yes, Miss Martin—our old, and we hope not uninteresting friend, Jessie Martin; and the scene of the introduction was the quarter-deck of the *Lady Flora.* At eight o'clock, the band struck up "God save the King," and the party separated for the night—the ladies retiring to their cabins, and the gentlemen adjourning to the cuddy, to discuss their grog. For several successive nights, however, by some strange coincidence, Morton always happened to be just making his appearance at the top of the companion ladder, as Miss Martin was emerging from the cuddy-door, to take her evening promenade. Of course, common politeness required that he should offer his arm to support her, because the ship had a good deal of motion, or because, if there were none just then, there might be by and by. Jessie was much pleased with her new acquaintance, when the first embarrassment of his manner wore off. This she attributed to that kind of *mauvaise honte* which a man acquires from a life of seclusion, or from a limited intercourse with society. Perfectly free from personal vanity, she had not the most remote idea that it had any connection with her own attractions; but she soon had cause to alter her opinion. She was surprised at his varied and extensive store of knowledge, and delighted with his lively and animated manner of imparting it. He had evidently mixed a great deal in society, and his conversation abounded in amusing and interesting anecdotes of celebrated characters whom it had been his good fortune to have associated with. There was something particularly gratifying to a mind like Jessie's, in being selected as the friend of one who appeared in every way so estimable; and his silent, yet constant and brother-like attention to her comfort and wishes, excited her feelings of grateful regard. Thus they went on for some time together, he becoming day after day more and more deeply enamoured, and she unconsciously increasing his love for her, by the frank and natural confidence of her manner towards him. At last, a hint from Mrs Jameson, the lady under whose charge she had been placed, opened her eyes to the danger and impropriety of so close an intimacy with one who, she felt, was daily making rapid advances in her good opinion, and whose increasing admiration of her was beginning to be but too evident. She called to mind, what she blamed herself for having so long kept out of view—her delicate position as the affianced bride of another, and saw, in its true colours, the double treachery she would be guilty of in further encouraging, or rather in not repelling, the attentions of a new admirer. It was doing great violence to her feelings gradually to withdraw from her companionship with Morton, particularly as she must have been blind indeed not to remark the pain which her apparent coldness inflicted upon him; but, when she had once made up her mind as to the propriety of the course she had adopted, she steadily and firmly persevered in it. Philip, surprised at the change in her manner, wearied himself with conjectures as to its cause, and feared that some inadvertent act or expression of his might have given her offence; but it was in vain he taxed his memory; he could not recall any instance in which his conscience could reproach him for having overstepped the bounds of respectful and polite attention.

At last, no longer able to bear the pain of uncertainty, he resolved at once boldly to venture on a step, upon the result of which he felt that his future happiness depended. Mrs Jameson had long noticed Morton's growing love for Jessie, and, knowing the peculiar situation in which her young protegé was placed, had, as we before remarked, advised her to adopt a more distant carriage towards him;

but, at the same time, charmed with Morton's amiable and estimable character, and feeling for the disappointment which awaited him, she herself redoubled her attentions towards him. Emboldened by the kind interest of her manner, Morton resolved on making her his confidante, and accordingly revealed to her, that which she had, with woman's quickness, long since discovered—the secret of his love.

"I have long feared this, Mr Morton," replied she; "feared it, because I feel the greatest interest in you, and because I know that there exists an insuperable obstacle to the fulfilment of your hopes."

"Insuperable! do not say insuperable, Mrs Jameson! I know that the shortness of my acquaintance with Miss Martin hardly warrants my presuming to address her; but will not time and the most devoted attachment work a change in my favour? Oh, let me see her! let me plead my own cause before her, and, if unsuccessfully, let me at least have the melancholy satisfaction of hearing my sentence from her own lips?"

"An interview would only be distressing to you both, Mr Morton. I am not at liberty to say more; but I know that the result will be unfavourable to your wishes."

Morton's importunity, however, prevailed; the kind-hearted friend, melted by the sight of his distress, promised to procure him a private interview with Miss Martin. Great was Jessie's agitation when she received Mrs Jameson's communication. She had resolutely and firmly avoided meeting Morton, ever since her eyes had been opened to the nature of her feelings towards him, which she considered it her bounden duty to repress, as a proper sacrifice to principle; but the struggle was a severe one—the arrow rankled deeper than she suspected. She was sitting alone, when Morton, by Mrs Jameson's invitation, entered the cabin. A crimson flush overspread her cheek, which as quickly left it again. She was looking very pale, and received him with visible agitation. It was in a tremulous and low tone of voice, that Morton first began to address her; but, as he proceeded, his countenance glowed, and his words followed each other in such a rapid and fervent torrent, that she in vain attempted to interrupt him. He described the impression her first appearance had made upon his heart, the charm he had experienced in her society, and the gradual, yet rapid growth of his admiration and esteem upon a closer acquaintance with her character. He dwelt long and deeply upon the grief her apparent estrangement had occasioned him, begged her to forgive him if he had in any way given her cause of offence, explained to her his circumstances and views in life, and ended by laying his heart and fortune at her feet.

"Mr Morton," replied she, "I would fain have spared myself and you the pain of this meeting; but I owed it to you, to make some reparation for the error into which I have unfortunately led you; otherwise, I would have deputed my friend to take upon her a duty so distressing to my own feelings. Severely do I now blame myself for having so inconsiderately indulged in the pleasure which your society afforded me. I mistook your feelings. I looked upon you as a friend, and I forgot how near akin friendship is to love. Forgive me, Mr Morton!—I never can be yours—I am the affianced bride of another."

"Affianced!" exclaimed Morton, pressing his hand upon his brow, and absolutely gasping with oppression of feelings. "O heaven! I did not expect this, Miss Martin. But is your heart in the engagement?"

Jessie burst into tears. "Urge me no farther, Mr Morton—my fate is in the hands of another. Henceforth, we must be as strangers to each other—Adieu!" And she glided into an inner apartment. Morton gazed after her for a moment, and then with a heavy heart left the cabin. His friend Hardy found him sitting, with his face buried in his hands upon the table, and eagerly and affectionately inquired the cause of his distress. Morton related to him all that had passed, and ended with saying—"And now, there is no more happiness for me in this world."

"My dear fellow," said his friend, "I give you joy."

"Give me joy, Hardy! I did not expect this from you! Instead of sympathising with me, you rejoice in my disappointment!"

"I rejoice, but not in your disappointment. Mark my words, Morton! The girl loves you, and, though at present, appearances are against you, do not be downcast—many a more broken boat has reached the land. If my suspicions are correct, depend upon it, a girl of Miss Martin's principles will not be guilty of the treachery of deceiving the man who claims her hand, into the belief that he possesses her heart."

During the remainder of the voyage, Jessie strictly adhered to her resolution, and Philip had too much respect for the woman he loved, to endeavour to shake it. It was soon evident to Mrs Jameson, who sincerely sympathised with him, that he was not the only sufferer; but that it was a grievous trial to them both; and, while she truly pitied them both, she could not but admire and respect the high sense of principle by which they were mutually actuated. The thought of the approaching termination of the voyage, which was by all else on board looked forward to with delight, was to them like the haunting recollection of a frightful dream, which they strove to drive from their minds; for, unhappy as they now were, it was bliss compared to the thought of being separated for ever. At length, the high land about Ganjam was seen from the masthead, and, two days afterwards, a strange sail hove in sight, which, on a nearer approach, proved to be a brig, with the pilot flag fluttering aloft. "All hands shorten sail!" was soon the cry, and "Up there, topmen!" In a few minutes, the lofty canvass was taken in, and the active topmen were busily employed in rolling it up; while the *Lady Flora*, with her maintopsail to the mast, scarcely moved through the water, as she gracefully rose and fell, or, as a popular authoress expresses it, "curtseyed," as if saluting the approaching stranger, which shortened sail as she came near, and rounded to on the opposite tack. A double-banked boat, manned with Lascars, shoved off from the brig, and the pilot soon made his appearance on board. The purser of the *Flora*, with letters and despatches for Calcutta, returned in the boat to the brig, which immediately made all sail for Kedgeree; and the *Lady Flora*, under easy canvass, followed at a distance in her wake. In the evening, the ship was brought to an anchor, at which time the brig was, lower masts down, a-head. Next morning, the *Flora* got under way, and was soon snug at anchor off Kedgeree, where she was to discharge some of her cargo, before proceeding up the river. In the meantime, her letters had been forwarded by "dawk" to Calcutta. In three days' time, a schooner-rigged budgerow was seen coming down the river, which anchored inshore of the *Flora*, and hailed her for a boat. A cutter was immediately despatched to her, which soon returned with a stranger sitting in the stern sheets. Jessie Martin had been sadly and listlessly employed, all the morning, in making preparations for landing, arranging, and directing her trunks; but her work proceeded slowly; for, in spite of her better reason, her thoughts dwelt mournfully on her approaching separation from Morton, when a knock was heard at the cabin door, and, as if to reproach her with her inconstancy, the lover of her youth stood before her. Jessie had, for months, been anticipating with dread, her meeting with Edward Malcolmson, and had, as she thought, nerved herself to go through the trial with firmness; but, now it had come upon her, she was taken unawares. The surprise was too great for her; she felt a mortal sickness creeping over her, and, turning deadly pale, fell fainting into her chair. Malcolmson ran to her assistance, and, sprinkling some water on her forehead, restored her to consciousness, when she hid her face in her hands, and burst into tears.

"Jessie," said Malcolmson, surprised at her agitation, "this is an unexpected reception. Am I an object of dread to you? I came here, ready and willing to fulfil my promise, and to claim you as my bride, and you seem to shrink from me, as if I were hateful in your sight."

"Oh, no!—not hateful, Edward. My heart owns you as an old and dear friend. There," said she, putting her hand into his, "there is the hand I promised you! But, as it is to be so, would that we had never parted!"

"What do I hear?" said he, in a tone which surprised her; "you say, here is my hand! Is your heart not with it, Jessie?"

"Edward," answered she, "this is no time for dissimulation. We are about to take a step on which our happiness or misery for life depends. You will despise me, Edward, but I dare not deceive you. My hand is yours, if you desire it; but my heart is another's." And, thus saying, she looked fearfully in his face, to see what effect her confession would have upon him. To her great surprise, a flush of gratification spread over his countenance, and he exclaimed—

"Heaven be praised! O Jessie, what a load of unhappiness you have removed from my heart! But why did you not write to me? Why did you not tell me of the change in your sentiments? And you have been dreading to meet me! and I have been equally alarmed at the thoughts of meeting you! How ridiculous! Two old lovers acting bugbear to each other! There is one comfort, however, Jessie, the one cannot rail at the other for inconstancy; for I have been playing truant as well as yourself. But who is the happy man who has supplanted me in your affections? I sincerely trust that he is worthy of you."

"You may have an opportunity of judging for yourself, ere long," replied she, smiling; "but I will call my friend Mrs Jameson, to you—she will explain all."

She then sent for Mrs Jameson, and, having introduced her to Malcolmson, and briefly stated how matters stood between them, left them alone together.

Mrs Jameson gave Malcolmson a full account of all that had taken place on board, spoke with enthusiastic admiration of the struggle, in both the lovers, between "passion and principle," and ended with saying that she considered Jessie a fortunate woman to have gained the affection of so amiable and estimable a man.

"But where is he? You must introduce me to him. I will go and bring him to you. I daresay I shall find him somewhere on deck." And away he went in search of him. The deck was strewed with passengers' luggage, and a young and handsome man was moving about among it, apparently selecting his own.

"I think this be one of your trunks, Mr Morton," said one of the men to him.

"Ah, there's my man!" said Malcolmson. "Pray, sir, is your name Morton?"

"Yes, sir, it is. May I beg, in return, to know whom I have the pleasure of addressing?"

"*My* name, sir, is Malcolmson; yours is familiar to my ear, as that of the guardian of a near relative whom I have never had the pleasure of meeting. Pray, Mr Morton, are you Irish?"

"Yes; but Morton is an adopted name—that of a kind relative and benefactor. My own name is Denby, Philip Denby."

"Gracious Powers! my brother! I am Edward Malcolmson, the son of your mother. But come with me into Miss Martin's cabin."

And Philip followed him, dreading that in his brother he had met his happy rival.

"Philip," said his brother, "how shall we commemorate this happy meeting? I must give you some memento to recall it to your recollection. Here," said he, taking Jessie's hand in his own, "this little hand is mine. I know you will prize it; so I make over my claim to you, if you can prevail upon Jessie to consent to the change of owners."

Need we say that that consent was granted? The lovers were united; and their example was soon followed by Edward Malcolmson and the fair object of his affections, who afterwards accompanied Morton and his bride home, to cheer their mother with the sight of the happy reunion of her family.

THE HAWICK SPATE.

The bursting of water-spouts is a phenomenon not often witnessed in Scotland; yet that such an accident has sometimes happened there, there are not a few melancholy tales to prove; and to this testimony we could add the story with which the following pages are occupied.

About the close of the seventeenth century, the town of Hawick was visited with such a calamity as that just spoken of, although we believe it was not attended with any singularly disastrous consequences. The water-spout which burst over the town, on the occasion alluded to, was of such immense magnitude, that the deluge of waters it discharged filled the main street in an instant from side to side, to the depth of from four to five feet. But it did not remain long here. The inclination of the street gave it motion, and away it swept with the force and impetuosity of a swollen river, carrying everything before it; and in its furious career razing no fewer than fifteen houses to their foundations.

Yet, if it had not been for the danger with which it was attended, and the loss which it occasioned, an onlooker, if placed in a situation of safety himself, could not possibly help being amazed, nay, sometimes laughing outright, at the ludicrous scenes which such an unusual and unlooked for visitor as the water occasioned; and particularly at the odd display of floating objects of all kinds that were hurrying along on the bosom of the impetuous stream; and which, from their utter unfitness, in most cases, for such aquatic feats as they had been thus suddenly called on to perform, presented a very laughable appearance. There were chairs, tables, baskets, beds, stools, &c., &c.,—sometimes in whole fleets, sometimes in detached squadrons—all scudding along, and apparently rivalling each other in speed, as if rejoicing in this new power of locomotion. Now, the basket might be seen giving the "go by" to the stool, and now the stool to the basket. Here might be seen a table, neck and neck with a window shutter; and there an envious chaff bed doing its best to make up with a hamper of greens, which having got into a rapid current, was bidding defiance to competition, and looking with most profound contempt on the unavailing efforts of its pursuers. All this, a lively imagination would discover in the march of the "Hawick Spate," as the inundation of which we speak was called.

But all the objects that floated down this heaven-descended stream, were not of the same ludicrous or uninteresting character with those enumerated. There was, at any rate, one exception, and one calculated to excite very different feelings in the beholder from those alluded to. This object was a cradle; and it was tenanted. A little mariner, unconscious of his danger, was on board the frail bark. Borne on by the current, the cradle swept rapidly along, unobserved by any one; for all were too intent on seeking their own personal safety, or on saving their property, to pay any attention to the concerns of others; or, if the cradle was seen, there was no one who would venture into the rushing torrent to rescue the little voyager from the apparently inevitable fate which awaited him. On, onward, the cradle sailed on the bosom of the stream, now wheeling rapidly round in the eddies created by sudden obstructions, and now shooting along like an arrow with the liberated waters.

But all is not lost that's in danger. In a secluded spot, at a short distance from the town, there happened to be, at the moment of which we speak, one of those gipsy encampments which, though still to be met with occasionally, are now more rare than they were then. This encampment was situated on one of the sloping sides of a deep hollow or ravine; and it so chanced that this was precisely the course which the waters took that rushed from the town; and thus everything which was borne along with them, and that had not been previously stranded, or otherwise arrested in its progress, floated past the bivouac of the gipsies—but, observe, past only, if they thought them not worth capturing; for the gipsies, with all the ready tact of their calling, in making the most of circumstances, had instantly bethought them of turning the present calamity to good account, by securing everything they could lay their hands upon; and in the end their booty was far from being inconsiderable.

Ranged along the edge of the stream, the gipsies, old and young, male and female, might have been seen at this moment, eagerly and busily employed, with long sticks, fishing in such articles as came within their reach. Some of their number, however, more daring or more greedy of spoil, might also have been seen far advanced into the water, pursuing, at the imminent risk of their lives, the same profitable pastime. It was while they were thus employed, that our little mariner and his bark came in sight of the gipsies. A general cry of surprise—not unmingled with compassion, at least on the part of the female members of the gang—burst from them when the cradle hove in sight, as they concluded that it was more than probable that it contained a child.

"Save the infant! save the infant!" exclaimed several of the women at once. But this was much easier said than done; for the cradle was floating down the very centre of the stream, which, though now a good deal diffused, and thus rendered shallower, was yet at least from four to five feet deep in the middle; and, besides this, the bottom was irregular, and interspersed with partial hollows, some of which would have taken the tallest man in the gang over the head. Aware of this, there was an evident hesitation on the part of the men to incur the risk of seizing the cradle although there were two motives to induce them to the attempt. The one was humanity—the other, a much less creditable one, interest; a child being at all times an acquisition to a gipsy gang, for the purpose of exciting charity.

Which of these two motives was the stronger on this occasion, we will not say; but certain it is, that there was an anxious desire on the part of all to save the infant which was presumed to be in the cradle.

One of the most eager for the accomplishment of this humane purpose, among the females of the gang, was a stout, masculine woman of the name of Jean Gordon, who hastily *kilting* up her petticoats, dashed into the stream when the cradle came in sight, with the view of intercepting it; but the water was too deep for her, and she was obliged to stop short long before she reached the line of the cradle's direction. Finding this, and highly excited by disappointment and anxiety, she frantically called on some of the men to try and effect the rescue of the child.

"John Young! John Young! save the wean!—save the wean!" she exclaimed, addressing herself to a tall athletic man, who was the farthest out in the stream, and who was at the moment busily employed in endeavouring to secure a chest of drawers which were in the act of tumbling past him. "I'm sure I've seen ye do baulder things than that, John, and for far less. O man, for the love o' God, and yer ain soul, save the puir innocent!" For it had now been ascertained that there actually was a child in the cradle.

The man thus appealed to by Jean made no reply, but steadily eyed for a moment the approaching object of her solicitude, to which he was now at liberty to pay attention, as the chest of drawers had fairly got out of his reach. The cradle, in the meantime, came gliding rapidly onwards;

but it was evident that it would pass at the distance of several yards from where Young stood.

Young, who was an excellent and a fearless swimmer, marked this, and took his measures accordingly; for he had determined on making an effort to save the infant. Having waded in to the shoulders, he waited till the cradle had arrived within a few feet of the line on which he stood, when he made a bold and sudden push into the centre of the stream, and so well calculated his distance, that, after making a few strokes—for he had lost his footing—he came in contact with it at the exact point on which he had reckoned. Seizing now the cradle with one hand, and keeping himself afloat with the other, Young prudently gave way to the current, and allowed himself to be borne along with it until an opportunity should present itself for his striking in for the shore. The situation of Young, however, was a perilous one; but he did not want the stimulus of approbation to enable him to go through with his humane purpose. Jean Gordon ran along the margin of the stream, keeping up with the floating, rather than swimming man, and anon raising her voice with these words of encouragement.

"That's my brave man!" she shouted, as she dashed through hedge and bush in her onward progress, with her eye fixed on the cradle, and regardless of all obstructions that lay in her path. "That's my brave man! Haud on, John—haud on! Never mind the ragin o' the waters, John, but be o' stout heart; for the Lord's wi' ye, and 'll bear ye up wi' a strong arm. This way noo, John—this way noo," she added, pointing to a small inlet where there was no current, and which promised an easy landing-place. "This way, John," she said, and dashed into the water to assist the voyagers to land.

Young, approving of Jean's suggestion, made a strong effort to free himself from the current, and succeeded in getting into the still and shallow water, where he quickly gained his feet; Jean, at the same moment, pouncing on the child, which she took from the cradle and hugged to her bosom in a rapture of joy.

"Faith, it was a teuch job, Jean," said Young, now shaking himself like a huge water-dog; "but it's a guid ane, and I houp 'll stan' against twa or three o' my sins."

Nae doot o't, John—nae doot o't," replied Jean, gazing fondly on the infant as she spoke. "It's a guid deed, and will be remembered to yer advantage baith here and hereafter. A bonny bairn it is, in troth," she went on, now apostrophizing the infant; "and 'll be sair missed by somebody, I warrant."

Having said this, she wrapped up the child in the blankets in which it had been enveloped in the cradle, and, accompanied by Young, returned to the encampment, which they found breaking up, and the gang hurriedly preparing to depart—a sudden move, indeed, but one for which there was good reason. The gipsies had rescued a number of things from the water, which it was certain their owners would miss, and which, therefore, it was not improbable they might institute some troublesome inquiries after, if they remained much longer where they were; and it was thought best to avoid this annoyance by decamping. Urged on by these considerations, the packing up was soon completed; and, in a very few minutes, the whole troop was on the march towards Yetholm, in the neighbourhood of which they again pitched their tents.

Our story does not require, neither would it be in the least interesting, to follow any further the subsequent wanderings of the erratic tribe to which we have introduced the reader; nor would it afford any entertainment to trace the infant years of the little one whom they had rescued from the flood. It is enough to say that he grew up, under the maternal care and tendance of Jean Gordon—who had especially attached herself to him—a stout and active lad, bearing the name of his foster-mother, which had been conferred upon him by the general consent of the gang, in consequence of their mutual attachment.

Young Gordon—the name by which we will now designate the little hero of the "Hawick Spate" evinced, at a very early period, a singularly bold and daring disposition; which, added to great physical strength, and a restless and enterprising spirit, promised, in due time, to place him at the head of the little community to which he belonged. But, though a wild and somewhat reckless character, young Gordon was not without some redeeming qualities. Gipsy though he was, he had a dash of honour and good feeling about him; and would, at any time, as soon do a good thing as a bad—perhaps sooner. In truth, all that was evil in him might have been fairly traced to the circumstances in which he was placed; while, whatever was good might, with equal truth and justice, have been attributed to his original nature.

Such, then, was Gordon in his twentieth year, for to this age had he attained when we resume our story.

As the gang to which Gordon belonged, was, one day, at this period, migrating from one place to another, they met an Irish regiment on its march to Stirling, to join the forces there assembled under the Duke of Argyle, who was preparing to march against the Earl of Mar, then in arms for the exiled family of Stuart.

Gordon, who had never seen an entire regiment before, was captivated with the warlike appearance it presented; and was suddenly struck with the desire of becoming a soldier—a desire which, in accordance with the impetuosity of his nature, he resolved instantly to gratify. With this view, but concealing his movements from his associates, he made up to a sergeant, and offered himself as a recruit. The sergeant, after eying him for a moment, and finding him, as he said, "a likely fellow," very gladly accepted his offer, and at once enlisted him.

Gordon, having thus secured the object of his wishes, asked permission to take leave of his friends before marching away with the regiment—a request which was at once granted, on the condition that he should be accompanied by a couple of soldiers, to insure his return. On joining his former associates, he informed them of the step he had taken, and added, that he had now come to bid them farewell. The intelligence struck them all with surprise and regret; for he was a general favourite, and, indeed, had now become the chief hope of the erratic family. But there was none among them who felt so much on this occasion as Jean Gordon.

On hearing of the step her adopted son had taken, she gave way to the most poignant grief.

"Oh, my bairn! my bairn!" she cried; "are ye gaun to leave me? Can ye hae the heart to desert her wha has carried ye in her arms through frost and snaw, through wind and weet—frae the time ye was a cradled wean till ye was able to tak the road yersel—wha has tended ye nicht an' day, wi' a mother's care, frae that time till this hoor—and wha has mony and aft the time sheltered ye in her bosom frae the biting blast which was like to cut short the thread o' her ain life? Ay, warm and dry hae I aften keepit ye then, when I was mysel' perishin wi' baith hunger and cauld, nane o' whilk, I trow, e'er came near ye. But ye shanna gang wi' the redcoats, Gordon," she added, with a determined air; "rather than ye should do that, I'll tell the haill secret we hae a' keepit sae lang, although it should bring every ane o' us to the gibbet—and that'll prevent ye gaun, I jalouse."

"That ye won't, old devil," here chimed in a ferocious-looking member of the gang. "We'll tak care o' that. Ye ken we hae a way o' disposing o' tell-tales, Jean; and, if ye talk o' peaching, ye shall hae a taste o't, I warrant.

To this threat Jean made no reply; and probably she would have entirely disregarded it, had there been no other inducement for her to keep silence on the subject she hinted at. But other inducements there were. Had she divulged the secret to which she alluded, and which was no other than that of Gordon's real parentage, she would have exposed two brothers and a husband to the vengeance of the law—and this consideration at once checked the resolution she had begun to entertain.

To return to our story. Jean's expostulations with Gordon on the step he had taken, and her appeals to his gratitude, in behalf of her wish to induce him to remain with her, were not unheeded by the young man, who readily acknowledged, with a tear in his eye while he spoke, all her kindnesses to him. But it was now too late. The deed was done, and there was no recalling it; neither, it must be confessed, did Gordon wish it should be recalled.

We have said that there was none of the little community to which Gordon belonged, who felt so much at the prospect of his leaving them as Jean; but this was not strictly correct. There was another who felt even more than she did; although these feelings were not, in every particular, of precisely the same description. That other person was Jean's daughter—a little black-eyed gipsy of about eighteen years of age, and between whom and Gordon there had long subsisted a mutual attachment.

On learning of the sudden step which her lover had taken, the poor girl wept bitterly, and was not consoled until Gordon had repeatedly and solemnly assured her of a continuance of his love, and that he would very soon return to her —"When," he said—but this sentence he finished in a whisper into her ear—"you shall become my wife, Rosie."

The gipsy girl held down her head and blushed. Gordon flung his arms around her neck—tenderly embraced her—and, in a few minutes afterwards, was on the march with his regiment.

In a few days after the arrival of the latter at Stirling, the Duke of Argyle, having learned that the Earl of Mar was approaching, with the view of giving him battle, mustered his army, which included the regiment to which Gordon belonged, and marched out to meet him. The opposing armies came in sight of each other on Sheriffmuir, where, as is well known, a pretty severe encounter took place, in which both sides claimed the victory. In this engagement, the regiment in which Gordon served was stationed on the left wing of the royal forces, which was opposed to the Highlanders in Mar's army, and thus involved in the most sanguinary part of the conflict.

Soon after the commencement of the battle, our young soldier was fortunate enough to save the life of an officer of the King's army. This officer, who was mounted, was unhorsed by a Highlander, who had previously wounded him severely in the thigh with his broadsword, and was about to complete his destruction with the same weapon as he lay defenceless on the ground, when Gordon ran him through the heart with his bayonet. In the next instant, and before the person whose life Gordon had saved, could inform him who he was, or thank him for his opportune and very effective aid, the tide of battle rolled over the spot, and they were separated. Nor did they meet again —and thus each remained in ignorance of who the other was.

It was not long after this, however, before Gordon himself required the aid which he had so timeously afforded another, and that under nearly similar circumstances. He was attacked by a ferocious mountaineer of immense stature, who made a cut at him with his broadsword; but Gordon not only adroitly warded off the blow with his musket, but succeeded in inflicting a deep wound on his antagonist with his bayonet. Enraged to find himself thus baffled by a stripling, and smarting with pain, the infuriated Celt beat down Gordon's firelock, and rushed in upon him, with the intention of dispatching him with his dirk. But this was not so easily done. Finding his musket no longer of any avail, Gordon dropped it on the ground, and, quick as lightning, sprang upon and grappled with his enemy; and thus, in turn, prevented him making use of his weapons. A desperate struggle now ensued between the combatants, each endeavouring to overturn the other; and, for a moment or two, it was doubtful which would eventually be thrown. But the superior strength of the Highlander finally prevailed, and Gordon fell, with his remorseless foe above him. In the next instant, the Highlander's dirk gleamed in the air, and was already on its descent towards the heart of the prostrate youth, when, ere the blow could be struck, both the weapon and the hand which held it fell to the ground. The arm of the Highlander had been severed, at this critical moment, by the sabre of a dragoon, who had approached the combatants unperceived by either. Thus miraculously freed from the danger of immediate death, Gordon sprang to his feet, and assisted the trooper in completing the destruction of his assailant, whom they instantly despatched. But the perils of the day to the young soldier did not terminate with this adventure; another soon after befell him, that threatened to end more fatally.

When making his way back to join his regiment, which had shifted its ground in the tumult of fight, he suddenly found himself intercepted by a party of the enemy, by whom he was taken prisoner, and immediately after disarmed, bound, and sent to the rear, where he found several others in the same unhappy situation with himself. On the termination of the conflict, the prisoners were marched to a small village, at the distance of eight or ten miles from the field of battle; and, on the following day, a kind of court-martial, formed of a few straggling officers hastily brought together, was held on them, when, after a trial which lasted only a few minutes, the whole were condemned to death, for being in arms—so ran the words of their doom—against their lawful king, James VII.; and the hour of two in the afternoon, of the same day, was appointed for carrying the sentence into effect.

The unfortunate men were now remanded to the several apartments in which they had been confined previous to their trial, and recommended to pass the short time they had to live in making their peace with God.

In the meantime a rude gibbet was hastily erected; and, at the appointed hour, the prisoners, and amongst these, Gordon, were marched to the place of execution, surrounded by a strong party of troopers. Dreadful as was his situation, however, young Gordon blenched not. His bearing was manly; and, in that fearful hour, his indomitable spirit enabled him to contemplate his approaching death with the calmness and resolution of a martyr. There was but one thought that unmanned him in this trying hour, when he allowed his imagination to dwell on it. This thought was of his Rosie, the object of his heart's fondest affections. But he checked the enervating reflection, and prepared to meet his doom with becoming fortitude.

The preparations for the tragical scene being completed, the prisoners were brought forward, and tied up, one after the other, to the fatal beam. Everything being now in readiness, the signal was about to be given which would have closed the world on the unfortunate men for ever; when all at once a loud and confused cry arose that the enemy was approaching. In an instant the gibbet was deserted by the troopers who surrounded it, who galloped off wildly in all directions in utter ignorance of the quarter from which the threatened danger was coming.

Gordon, whose presence of mind had never for a moment forsaken him, perceiving the opportunity for escape which thus so unexpectedly presented itself, instantly took advantage of it. Having hurriedly desired the brother in misfortune who stood next him to unloose the rope with which his arms were bound, he freed himself from the noose which was about his neck, and, with the rapidity of thought, drew from his pocket a large clasp knife, and cut the bands by which his fellow-prisoners were pinioned, and set them all at liberty. Having effected this generous purpose, Gordon leaped to the ground, and called out that every one should now endeavour to save himself—a recommendation which it will readily be believed was very soon attended to.

In the meantime, however, the troopers having discovered that they had been frightened by a false alarm, which, indeed, it had been, hastened back to carry the sentence of the prisoners into effect; when, finding that they had made their escape, they commenced a furious pursuit, and succeeded in overtaking several of the unfortunate men, whom they instantly cut down—adopting this summary procedure in preference to the more tedious and troublesome one of carrying them back to the gibbet.

Gordon, who had by this time gained a rising ground, where he had thrown himself down breathless and exhausted, saw this prompt execution done on two or three of the fugitives; and, in dread of sharing a similar fate, again started to his feet, and resumed his flight.

But this movement threatened to have been fatal to him. He was perceived by two troopers, who immediately gave chase after him; and, as the height which he had taken, though pretty steep, was free from any obstruction which could arrest the progress of horsemen, they gained fast upon him. Poor Gordon now gave himself up for lost, and thought that he had but escaped the halter to perish by the sword. Still, however, he struggled on; but his pursuers, continuing to gain on him, were soon so near that he could distinctly hear the abusive epithets and deep curses in which they at once expressed their impatience, the length of the chase, and their eagerness to accomplish the destruction of him who caused it. A few minutes more, without the intervention of some fortunate circumstance, and Gordon would have been under the sabres of his pursuers; but such a circumstance did at this moment interpose, and he was once more saved from a fate that seemed inevitable. A ledge of rock impassable to horsemen, but easily accessible by a person on foot, suddenly presented itself. For this place of safety Gordon made with all possible speed, and with a desperate effort quickly gained a sufficient height to defy further pursuit from the troopers. But although he was out of the reach of their swords, he had not the same security from their bullets; and this he soon found. Two shots were fired at him by his pursuers, and both hit the rock so close by his head, that some of the splinters struck him in the face, and wounded him pretty severely. The aim of the troopers had been so well taken, that Gordon had no doubt, if they got another round at him, that he would be brought down; but, fortunately, he was able to clear the summit of the ledge before they had time to reload, and was thus secure, for a time at least, from all further danger from his pursuers.

Although now dreadfully exhausted, Gordon continued his flight until he became so worn out that he found it impossible to proceed. When reduced to this extremity, he crawled into a retired field that lay at some distance from any road, and flung himself at full length behind a low wall by which it was intersected. Here he soon fell into a profound sleep, in which all the dangers he had passed, and all the perils to which he might yet be exposed, were for a time forgotten. In this situation, however, he had not remained above an hour, when he was awakened by some one shaking him by the shoulder. He started to his feet in the utmost alarm, having no doubt that it was an enemy who had discovered his retreat, but was soon relieved from his fears by perceiving a person in the dress of a shepherd standing before him.

"Whar hae ye come frae, honest lad?" said the man, in a kindly voice, and with an expression of sympathy in his countenance, excited by the fatigued and haggard appearance of the young man.

"From the Borders," replied Gordon, not caring to come to particulars with a stranger in such troublesome times, and uncertain what treatment he might meet with by claiming connection with either of the contending parties between whom the kingdom was then divided.

"I'm jalousin," said the stranger, with an expressive smile, as he eyed some of the fragments of military costume which were still about Gordon's person—"I am jalousin that ye hae been *oot*, young man. Do ye ken a place they ca' Shirramuir?" he added, with a knowing, but good-humoured look, which at once induced Gordon not only to acknowledge that he did, but to tell him his precise situation, together with all that had lately befallen him.

"Aweel, aweel, freen," said the man, when Gordon had concluded—"It's a' the same to me what side ye war on, for I carena a sheep's head for ony o' them. Sae, ye'll come alang wi' me, an' I'll gie ye a nicht's quarters, and some refreshment, o' whilk ye seem to me to staun muckle in need; for, in troth, lad, ye are sair forfochten like."

Having said this, the kind-hearted shepherd conducted Gordon to his house, which was close at hand, and gave him all the entertainment he had so generously promised. Here Gordon remained all night; and, on the following morning, prepared for his departure, having now resolved to return to his old friends, the gipsies.

Previous to his setting out, his kind host suggested that he should strip himself of everything about his apparel that might discover the side to which he had belonged—a suggestion with which Gordon immediately complied; when his entertainer supplied the deficiencies thus occasioned, by presenting him with a shepherd's plaid and bonnet, to which he added a small sum of money.

Thus provided, refreshed, and, we may add, disguised, Gordon took the road, and on the third day thereafter, arrived in safety at the encampment of his old friends, which, knowing their haunts, he had no difficulty in finding.

The joy of the whole gang, and particularly of Jean and her daughter, on seeing him so soon again, was excessive. Jean hugged him to her bosom, and in a rapture of delight, poured out upon him a torrent of the most endearing epithets ; while her daughter, though not less overjoyed, sought, with maidenly modesty, to conceal the happiness she felt. But it would not hide. The smile and the tear which she could not suppress, betrayed the secret of her feelings. This excitement over on all sides, Gordon gradually fell into his former position in the little community, and resumed the habits and wandering life which his short, but eventful military career had interrupted ; and in this way time ran on until other three or four years had elapsed.

About the end of this period, as Gordon, with two or three more of his associates, was one day passing through Jedburgh, where there was, at the time, a recruiting party stationed, two soldiers, after looking earnestly at him for some minutes, suddenly made up to him, and asked if his name was not Gordon, and if he had not once belonged to the —— Regiment of Foot. To both of these questions Gordon at once replied in the affirmative, not being aware that he had any reason to do otherwise ; for it had never occurred to him that, by not rejoining his regiment after the battle of Sheriffmuir, he had rendered himself liable to a charge of desertion ; still less did he think that he had actually been all this time a deserter. But so it certainly was ; and so he now found it to be.

"Then," said one of the soldiers, on his acknowledging both circumstances, "you come along with us, my lad; you are our prisoner." And both the men drew their side-arms to make good their capture.

Gordon was now carried to the quarters of the commanding officer of the recruiting party, and by him was immediately sent off, escorted by three soldiers, to Edinburgh Castle, to stand trial for desertion from his Majesty's service.

In a few days after his arrival there, a court-martial was summoned, when Gordon's identity, and the facts of his enlistment and desertion having been proven, he was condemned to be shot—the utmost penalty of military law having been adjudged him, as the desertion had taken place in time of war, and at a period when fidelity was most especially required.

Thus was poor Gordon twice exposed to the horrors of a violent death by judicial sentence; but still his natural courage did not fail him. He again boldly prepared to meet the fate which seemed determined to overtake him, and which now certainly seemed quite inevitable, as there was not the slightest chance of any circumstance occurring in this case to avert it.

The place selected for the impending tragedy was the Portobello Sands; and thither the unfortunate culprit, accompanied by the whole garrison, was conveyed on the day appointed for his execution.

Amongst the official persons of note who were present on this melancholy occasion was the Duke of Argyle, who had arrived in Edinburgh on the preceding day; and who, as commander-in-chief of the King's forces in Scotland, conceived it his duty to attend the execution of the criminal. All the ceremonies usual on occasions of this kind having been gone through, and the regiment formed into three sides of a square, the unfortunate prisoner was conducted to the spot, marked by his coffin being placed on it, where he was to receive his death. The execution party, consisting of twelve men, placed in three rows of four each, were advanced within a few paces of their object, when the front rank knelt down, the second stooped, and the third stood upright, that thus three several fires might be delivered, and the destruction of the victim be secured.

Gordon had now also knelt down, and there was only the signal wanting—of which the prisoner had, as is usual in such cases, the control—to complete the tragedy, when, just as the unhappy man was about to make that signal, the Duke of Argyle, who had been eyeing him attentively for some time, suddenly left those with whom he had been conversing, and waving to the execution party to withhold their fire, galloped up to the culprit, whom he thus abruptly addressed:—

"Young man, were you at the battle of Sherriffmuir?"

To this question, so unexpectedly put, it was some time before Gordon could make any reply; his mind being wholly absorbed by thoughts appropriate to his awful situation. When first put to him, therefore, he merely looked at the querist with a vacant stare, as if wholly unconscious of the purport of what had been said to him. In a few seconds, however, he recollected himself, and, with a firm voice, replied that he was at that battle.

"Did you see me," continued the Duke, on his making this answer, "in any situation of particular peril on that day!"

Gordon now in his turn looked at the Duke with a scrutinizing eye, and thought that he recognised a face which he had seen before. He began, in short, to imagine that there was a resemblance, though he did not think it by any means so strong as to warrant him in saying so, between the person who now addressed him, and the officer whose life he had saved at Sheriffmuir.

"I do not know, sir," said Gordon in reply to the last question put to him, "that I saw *you* in any situation of particular peril on that day; but I saw an officer of our army in such a situation, and I believe I helped a little to bring him out of the scrape."

"You ran the fellow who was about to slay that officer through the body with your bayonet, did you not?" exclaimed the Duke, with eager rapidity.

"I did, sir," said Gordon, who yet knew nothing of the quality of the person who addressed him.

"Exactly," replied Argyle. "Well, sir," he continued, "the life you saved was mine, and I shall now try to repay the debt by saving yours, if I can."

Having said this, the Duke turned round and waved to the officer who was in command of the troops present to come to him.

On his approach—"Colonel," he said, "I wish this execution delayed. Do you, therefore, sir, if you please, order the firing party to retire, and let the regiment be marched back to its quarters. I, of course, take the whole responsibility of this proceeding on myself, Colonel."

The officer to whom this was addressed bowed and retired to execute the orders given him; and in a few minutes thereafter, the regiment, in the centre of which Gordon was placed, marched off the ground to the sound of cheerful music.

On reaching the Castle, the Duke desired Gordon to be brought before him, when he proceeded to examine minutely into the particulars of his case, with the view, evidently, of eliciting as many favourable and extenuating circumstances as possible; and he evinced great satisfaction in finding that there were a good many of these. There was the youth and inexperience of the prisoner; the fact of his having been only a day or two enlisted; of his having received no bounty, (which was the case;) the evidence that his crime had proceeded from ignorance of military law, and not from design; and, above all, there was to be taken into account his treatment by the insurgents—considerations, all of which were crowned by the fact of his having saved the life of the commander-in-chief.

On the conclusion of this examination, Gordon was placed again in confinement; and for an entire week he heard nothing more of the proceedings regarding him. Early one morning, however, at the end of this period, the Duke of Argyle, entered his apartment, when, pulling out a paper from his pocket—

"Gordon," he said, "your life is saved. His Majesty's clemency has been extended to you, in consideration of the extenuating circumstances in your case; and here is your pardon. Here, also," he continued, producing another paper, which he handed to the prisoner, "is your discharge. And here again," he said, placing a purse of money in Gordon's hand, and smiling as he spoke, "is a passport. And now, my good fellow," he added, "take my advice, and return to your friends as soon as possible."

We will not take up the reader's time by attempting to describe Gordon's feelings on this occasion. Suffice it to say, that they were as wild, and tumultuous, and joyful as such a singular and unexpected change in his situation can be supposed to have been capable of exciting. These feelings, however, did not distract him so much as to prevent him following the Duke's counsel, which exactly jumped with his own inclinations.

After thanking his benefactor in the most grateful language he could command, he instantly quitted the apartment in which he had been confined, and hurried out of the castle, neither looking to the right nor to the left, till he had reached the heart of the city, when he stopped for a moment to breathe and to reflect on his happiness, which was so great, however, that he had some difficulty in believing in its reality.

In an hour afterwards, Gordon once more set out to join his old friends, whose encampment he reached on the following day, and again resumed his old habits and station in the erratic community. Again, too, three or four additional years passed away; but they did not pass now without bringing some of the changes which are interwoven with the lot of mankind, and which fall to the share equally of gipsy and prince. During these three or four years, Jean Gordon's husband, and her two brothers, had been gathered to their fathers, her daughter had attained the stature and the years of womanhood, and she herself was beginning to feel the weakened energies of age. Another change in this little community, during these three or four years, was the elevation of Gordon to the chief place in it—a situation to which he was unanimously elected on the death of Jean's husband, who had hitherto been looked up to as the head of the fraternity.

It was about this period, and as the gang were one day strolling up the banks of the Tweed, near a place called Upsetlington, under the conduct of Gordon, who was leading them on one of their usual wandering expeditions, a salmon cobble, in which were two persons, were seen sweeping down the river, which, being swollen to an unusual height with nearly an entire week's heavy and incessant rain, was at this moment tearing along with the most dreadful fury. The day, besides, was widely tempestuous; and, as the wind was blowing directly in the teeth of the current, there was a roughness in the middle of the stream which would have endangered the safety of a much better sea-boat than a salmon-cobble—a truth this, which was but too evident on the present occasion.

The cobble, which was now being borne down by the stream, seemed to have completely freed itself from the control of those on board of it, and was careering along with an impetuosity and total want of direction, which left no doubt on the minds of those who beheld it that a catastrophe was at hand. It was evident, in short, that the boat must very soon be swamped and overset; and in this opinion the persons on board of her seemed themselves to concur, as they made no other effort to save themselves than waving their hands, from time to time, to those on the banks, to intimate their distress, and to invite their assistance.

But, although these unfortunate persons had been willing to make any effort to extricate themselves from their perilous situation, they could not; for their oars had been swept away by the current, and they were thus left perfectly helpless.

Gordon marked the desperate situation of the unwilling voyagers, and on the instant determined on making an effort to save them.

Near the spot where he stood looking on this appalling scene, there happened to be another cobble lying, which its owner had drawn high up on the bank, to keep it out of the reach of the current; and its two oars were still in it.

Gordon eyed the boat for a moment, and in that moment his resolution was taken. He seized the cobble with both hands, and being a remarkably powerful man, with one effort hurled it into the stream. This done, he leapt into it, grasped the oars, in the use of which he was singularly expert, and dashed headlong after the runaway bark, which, at the imminent risk of his own life, and with great exertion, he succeeded in capturing and bringing safely to shore.

The persons thus saved, by the gallantry of Gordon, from inevitable death, proved to be the owner of the cobble, and a Mr Riddell, from Hawick, a respectable elderly man, and reputed to be extremely wealthy, whom the former had been endeavouring to ferry across the river.

When the party had fairly landed, Mr Riddel took Gordon by the hand, and, pressing it warmly, thanked him, in the most grateful terms, for the important service he had rendered him. "But, young man," he added, "I do not mean to pay you with thanks alone. It is my intention to give you a much more substantial proof of my gratitude than mere words. Thank God, I am able to do so; and the will is not wanting. You shall go with me to Hawick, my young friend, and I will then see in what way I can best shew my sense of the obligation I owe you. In the meantime, take this," he said, handing Gordon a purse, "as an earnest for the future. But you must come to Hawick with me. This you must do—I will take no denial. I am childless, man," he added, smiling, "although I was not always so; and there's no saying, if ye quit this wandering life of yours, and betake ye to an honest calling, what good fortune may arise to you out of this day's occurrences."

"Nae sayin, indeed," here chimed in Jean Gordon, who had been listening to what Mr Riddel said with intense interest, and with a degree of agitation which it would have been very difficult for a mere onlooker to have accounted for.

"Nae sayin, indeed, what guid fortune may arise to the lad oot o' what has happened this day. To Hawick wi' ye he maun gang, Mr Riddel," continued Jean, who knew every individual in the country for fifty miles round; "an' he couldna gang wi' a nearer freen, tak my word for that."

"He could not go with one who would be more willing to be his friend, at any rate, Jean," said Mr Riddel, who also knew the gipsy well, both by sight and name, and smiling as he spoke.

"An' guid richt he has to your friendship, Mr Riddel," replied Jean.

"That he has, Jean," said the former. "The man who has saved my life has indeed a good right to my friendship; and he shall have it."

"He has maybe ither claims on ye forbye that, though, Mr Riddel."

"Indeed! Well, he may; although that is surely enough. But what other claims do you allude to, Jean? I shall be glad to know what they are, that I may discharge them all at once."

"Then you shall know, Mr Riddel," replied Jean, with a sudden determination of manner. "They're noo awa that micht tak ony scaith frae what I'll noo tell ye; an', forbye, it's a thing I hae lang resolved upon, an' sae I'll e'en tak this opportunity o' doin't. Come aside wi' me, here, a wee bit, Mr Riddel," added Jean; "an' you, too, Gordon," she said; "come, till I speak to ye baith." And she led the way to a little distance from the other persons who were present on the occasion, and who had hitherto been auditors of all that passed.

"Mr Riddel," now said Jean, "do ye mind the Hawick Spate?"

"Mind it!" replied the person addressed—"to be sure I do, Jean; I have but too much reason to mind it." And here Mr Riddel's voice became tremulous with emotion. "It deprived me of my only child—of the only child I ever had. This you doubtless know, Jean," he continued; "as everybody in Hawick, and for many miles round it, who recollects the spate, knows that my child—and a fine little fellow he was—was swept away in his cradle, by the stream, and never afterwards heard tell of. The cradle was, indeed, found," added Mr Riddel, in a melancholy tone, "but not the infant. But why do ye ask this question, Jean?"

"Just to bring to yer recollection the very circumstance ye hae mentioned, Mr Riddel," replied the gipsy "Noo, sir," she went on, "tak a look o' that lad, [pointing to Gordon,] an' tell me if ye wad ken him to be yer ain son. And you, Gordon," she said, "look at that gentleman, an' see if ye wad tak him to be yer faither; for, as God's in heaven," she continued, "that's the relationship in which ye twa staun to ane anither!"

"Woman! what do you mean? exclaimed Mr. Riddel in an angry tone. "Are you deranged? What absurd nonsense is this you talk? I never had any son but the child that was drowned."

"I didna say ye had, Mr. Riddel," replied Jean; "but that's yer son, nevertheless. This I swear, by a' my hopes o' a hereafter!"

"Gracious God!—explain, woman! explain!" exclaimed Mr. Riddel, now greatly agitated—a glimmering of the possibility of what had actually occurred suddenly bursting on his mind. "Tell me, I beseech you, what you mean at once, and without further evasion."

Thus entreated, Jean Gordon proceeded to detail the whole of the circumstances connected with the saving of the child (whom, we presume, we need not inform the reader in more explicit terms, was, indeed, the son of the person to whose paternity Jean ascribed him) from the Hawick flood.

When she had concluded—

"Extraordinary! most extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Riddel, now overwhelmed with a variety of new and strange feelings. "Can it be possible? O God! thy ways are inscrutable. But what proof have I of the truth of your story, Jean?" said the agitated father, gazing on his son.

"Proof!" exclaimed the gipsy; "look at the lad, Mr. Riddel—look at him, closely; an' if ye dinna find proof enough in that face, ye'll be hard to convince. Is he no your very counterpart?"

This part of Jean's evidence was, indeed, of the most irrefragable kind; for the resemblance was remarkably striking.

"An' if that'll no satisfy ye," she went on, "is there no half-a-dozen an' mair o' oor folk, that saw the hail affair, an' that'll swear to the truth o' a' that I've said?—an' ye may tak them up, ane by ane, this minute, if ye like, an' examine them a' separately on the subject; an' if ye find ane o' them contradick me in the sma'est particular, dinna believe ae word o' what I hae said. An', if that'll no convince ye yet, Mr Riddell," she continued, "ye shall hae mair proof still. Come here, Gordon," she said, addressing the young man, who, in silent amazement, was listening to this extraordinary *denouement*—"sit down." He obeyed; and she pulled off the shoe and stocking from his left leg. Then holding up the lad's naked foot, "Do ye ken thae twa taes, then, Mr Riddell?" she inquired, pointing, at the same time, to the little toe and the one adjoining to which the former was united.

"He is my son! he is my son! I can no longer doubt it," exclaimed Mr Riddel, in a rapture of joy, on seeing this proof of his identity. And he rushed towards Gordon, and folded him in his arms.

"Oh! cruel woman!" he said, after the first burst of emotion had so far subsided as to allow him to speak—"to keep my boy so long from me, and to cause me so many weary nights and days, and long years of sorrow and mourning on his account! But I forgive you," he immediately added; "I forgive you, in consideration of the happiness which you have this day conferred on me, late though it be."

"You may forgie me, Mr Riddel," said the now repentant gipsy; "but I canna forgie mysel. I hae made some amends, noo, hooever," she continued; "an' that's a relief to my conscience. But I hae still another score o' the same kind to pay off in another quarter; and it shall be dune at a' hazards—but o' this, mair hereafter. I hae dune ye a great wrang, Mr Riddel," continued Jean; "but I was aye kind to yer bairn. I hae been a mother to him ever since I first took him in my arms, as I daur say he will, sae far as he recollecks, bear witness. He'll say that muckle for me, I'm sure."

"That I will, Jean," said Gordon, taking her kindly by the hand; "an' may I be forgotten by Him that's aboon when I forget you, or yer motherly kindness to and care owre me!'

"Enough, enough, Francis Riddel," said his father—"for that was the name, my son, I intended to have given you, and it is the name by which I shall now and henceforth designate you—I forgive her. Nay, I not only forgive her, man, but, if she will quit this wandering life of hers, I will see to her future subsistence and comfort as long as she lives."

"Many thanks, Mr Riddel, for your goodness," said Jean, "but I'm no just yet prepared for that step. But, when I am, which will maybe be very sune, I'll no fail to seek the shelter ye sae kindly offer me."

It is, perhaps, full time, now, that we should say what were the feelings of Francis—as we, too, must now call him—in the singular circumstances in which he thus so suddenly and unexpectedly found himself placed. These were of a mingled kind. He felt all the joy natural on such an impressive occasion as that of having a lost—or, at least, an unknown—parent restored. He felt, too, a satisfaction in the promotion which his personal interests would now certainly experience, and with the idea of the respectable footing on which he would now be placed with the world. But there were two circumstances in particular that weighed against these, and tended to lessen the effect they would otherwise have had. One of these was his attachment to the wandering life to which he had been accustomed, and which he saw, with regret, he must now abandon. The other, and by far the most distressing one to him—was the probability that he would now also be called upon to renounce his beloved Rosie. On this point, however, he determined to remain obstinate, and rather to forfeit his father's favour, with all the advantages that might accrue from it. than to abandon her to whom he already considered himself bound by the most sacred ties. On this subject, however, Francis prudently resolved to say nothing, in the meantime, but just to allow matters to take their course, till proper time and place should present themselves for announcing his resolution, and carrying that resolution into effect.

Mr Riddel now again repeated his proposal, that his son should instantly accompany him home; and, with this proposal. Francis complied, although he certainly did not do so without much secret reluctance and regret, for the reasons which have been already explained.

After bidding, then, a kind adieu to his former associates—a most affectionate one to Jean, whom he bound, by a solemn promise, to call upon him, in a few days, at Hawick—and whispering two or three words of consolation into Rosie's ear—Francis set off with his father; and, in due time, both arrived in safety at Mr. Riddel's residence, in the town above named, where the former was quickly installed in all the rights and privileges of a son and heir, and as such was recognised by all his father's friends and acquaintances; his mother having been by this time many years dead.

In about four weeks after the occurrence of the circumstances just related, the gipsy gang to which Francis Riddel had belonged, appeared one evening, about dusk, at their old station in the vicinity of Hawick. It was the precise spot where Francis had been rescued from the flood some seven and twenty years before, and was a favourite locality of the wandering tribes.

Delighted with the intelligence of their arrival, which soon reached him, Francis, carefully however concealing his intention from his father, stole down to the gipsy encampment, where, as he expected, he found his beloved Rosie, to see whom, indeed, was the chief, if not the sole object of his visit. The joy of the lovers at meeting—for they had not seen or heard of each other since they parted on the day of the adventure on the Tweed—need not be dwelt upon, as it was exactly what is usual in such cases; but other circumstances arose from this interview which it may be more worth while to record.

"My father," said Francis, addressing Rosie, as they sat together on a green bank, at a little distance from the gipsy encampment, "has set his face against our marriage. He has said that in nothing will he oppose me, but in that. But that, if I disobey him there, well as he loves me, he will disinherit me, and leave me penniless. 'Marry a gipsy girl,' he said, 'and bring disgrace upon your connections! Never, never, with my consent.' "Ha! ha!" exclaimed Francis, contemptuously, "little does he know, honest man, what a trifle all his wealth and all his possessions are, and would be, were they ten times greater, when put into the scale against such love as mine for thee, Rosie. He may keep his wealth, for I *will* marry"——

"The Laird o' Upha's dochter," suddenly struck in Jean Gordon, who had now approached the lovers, unperceived. "Ay, the Laird o' Upha's dochter," she repeated. "She'll be yer wife, Francis. Winna she?"

"No, indeed, Jean, not her, whoever she be," said Francis, laughingly, and flinging his arms affectionately around Rosie's neck. "Not her, but my own sweet, dark-eyed gipsy girl here—*your* daughter, Jean."

"The Laird o' Upha's dochter, I tell ye, ye'll marry, nevertheless, Francis. Not mine; for I hae nane. Yer faither 'll then hae nae objection to yer linkin to, I'm thinkin; for a weel-tochered lass she'll be—an' o' gentle bluid has she come."

From this point, the little that now remains of our story will be best conducted to its termination, by plain and concise narrative. Francis and Rosie now learned, with overwhelming amazement, that the latter was indeed a daughter of Maitland of Uphall's, an old and highly respectable family, and not of Jean Gordon's; and that she had been stolen in her infancy by the gang with which she was now associated. Jean, also, now informed them that she had already announced at Uphall that their daughter still lived, and had accompanied this announcement by a promise to restore her within three days to her parents.

The circumstance of Rosie's real parentage, Francis lost no time in communicating to his father, who heard it at first with incredulity; but promised that, if the facts were found to be as stated, he would not only withdraw his objections to their marriage, but would do all in his power to promote it.

To this, we have only to add, that the identity of Rosie having been proven to Uphall's entire satisfaction, he acknowledged her as his child, and soon after gave his consent to her union to Francis Riddel, who had been equally expeditious, as in the case of his own father, in informing him of his claims on his daughter.

The lovers were accordingly married, and lived many happy years together, filling a highly respectable station in society, and esteemed by all who knew them for the strict propriety of their conduct in all the relations of life.

They left sons and daughters, who inherited their wealth, which was very considerable, but none of whom ever experienced, so far as ever we heard, any of their vicissitudes.

THE AVENGER;

OR,

THE LEGEND OF MARY LEE.

AN old legend describeth to us "The Castle," a large residence, which, some centuries ago, graced, with its high towers, the banks of the river Annan, perhaps one of the finest of the Scotch rivers if all the elements of beauty are taken into account. "The Castle" stood towards the Solway, and was the seat of a family that had risen to some distinction as commoners, from the possession of considerable wealth, acquired by an ancestor, who had got possession of some lucrative monopolies from the first of the Jameses. The family name was Ashley, of English origin, but the more early members having intermarried with daughters of Scotland, and their fortunes having flourished, for the first time, on her then poor uncultivated soil, they gradually came to lose every quality and mark of the country from which they originated except the name.

Robert Ashley, the proprietor of this residence at the time our story commences, was a widower, having an only son alive, the heir-expectant of his father, and the proprietor, in anticipation, of all the rights of the property. The young man, whose name was also Robert, was possessed of high feelings of love and poetry; but, as is often the case, he allowed these to outstep the bounds of morals—living a luxurious life of pleasure, suited to his strong susceptibilities, but altogether unsanctified by a single restraint, which the greatest libertines often offer, as a sacrifice to offended virtue. He had been a follower of gipsies, and got from them the gipsy name of Robin Ary, pronounced Robin-a

Ree. The only palliation his most partial friend could offer for his extravagant conduct, was, that his amours, of which he had many, were not the result of a grovelling propensity of lust, cultivated for its own sake, and unredeemed by any concomitant affections of the heart. His intrigues, though all ending in gratifications of gross passion, began in the excitement of love; not that love, the influence of which tends to elevate and refine the other sentiments; but still a love which, in the world, very often passes for its more pure ally—using the same language, exhibiting the same external marks, and, unfortunately, so completely personating it, as to deceive the confiding hearts of the objects to whom it is directed. The easily lighted, fickle, heartless, and seducing passion, was the bane of the young man—springing up, with sudden violence, on the first contemplation of beauty—rendering him uneasy till it was communicated and miserable till it was gratified—too often by the ruin of his victim. A fine form and expressive countenance, a command of the language of the heart, and riches, rendered him one of the most dangerous companions of the fair sex of his time; yet paradoxical as it may be, his character for success in rendering miserable that sex whose happiness ought to be the pride and satisfaction of him who has arrogated to himself the title of lord of the creation, instead of keeping victims out of his way, seemed to lure them into his power; at least, there could be no doubt that the gentleman gipsy Robin-a-Ree had always more admirers than any other young man on the north of the Solway. So it seems to be, that vice is sometimes ordained to be fed to repletion, producing in the end the ruin of its powers and properties, which, otherwise, might be exercised for greater evil.

On the lands pertaining to "The Castle," there was the little port, which we must disguise under the name of Fairhaven, where resided Gilbert Lee, a fisherman, whose boat was often required by Robin for pleasure excursions on the

Solway. Gilbert had a daughter, Mary, whose youth, being eight years younger than Ashley, had, for a time, protected her from the dangerous attention of the young laird. This Mary Lee was a peculiar girl; she was accounted the handsomest in Fairhaven; and her father had only one fault to impute to her—a most unforgiving spirit. Kind and affectionate to all who exhibited those qualities to her, Mary seldom forgot or forgave an injury or an insult; and so strongly marked was her character in this respect, that her school antipathies remained with her, and increased as she grew up—no kindness or conciliation having the effect of modifying or mollifying the determination and bitterness of her hatreds. So says our chronicle, and so is it often in the world, that the most opposite feelings and passions—like the nerves of the human system, which, operating equally on the gall-bladder and the heart, are bound up in the same sheath—may be found in the same individual, acting with equal and antagonist forces, and realizing a species of manichæism which has perplexed optimist moralists from the beginning of the world. As the good is strong, so often is the evil, in the same individual; and it would have been hard to say whether Mary Lee's loves were stronger or weaker than her hatreds.

"O Mary," her father would say, "he will be a happy or a miserable man wha gets ye for his lot on earth; he will get either the sweet honey o' yer young and loving heart, or the sting which, as in the bee, receives its poison from that very honey itsel': so do we see a' sweet things mair productive o' sourness than the bitters which we avoid, and darkness is ne'er so visible as when licht is its nearest neibor, and hauds the candle to its ill favoured face."

Now, Mary understood, perhaps, but little of her father's quaint remarks, and little did she know of the possession of qualities which were destined to stand out in such prominent and startling relief from the mellowed hues of our

Christian faith. Has God, for his own purposes, hid us from ourselves, that our sense of free agency should remain unimpaired by the knowledge of the connate bent of our apparently fated inclinations? Poor Mary Lee acted from her impulses; nor did she see danger. There is the "mid-deep," which the sailors of the Solway point out to the passenger who looks on the fallacious calm, as it hovers o'er the graves of many a drowned mariner. There is a moral mid-deep in the paths of most of us, but which we never see till we are engulphed.

As Mary Lee grew up, she came necessarily under the view of young Ashley, who, as he called for the boat, noticed the young maiden sitting on the beach, throwing the glances of her blue eye on the mirror of the silvery Solway; a fair type of her own nature, though she was unconscious of the similitude—beautiful in its soft and playful undulations, but terrible in its rage.

"Have we got a mermaid sitting here?" said Robin, on a day, to a companion. "How like she is to the pictured fancy of that creature of imagination! She has only to let her hair fall over her shoulders, and send forth one of those plaintive seductive cries which, like the singing of the Sicilian virgins mentioned by Ovid, tempt poor passengers ashore to their destruction, to realize the type in its greatest perfection. Well, by the way, I think I would have risked myself in the arms of those famous sirens, who are represented to have been so cruel as to kill their lovers—at least I would trust myself with that fair one. What thinkest thou of my courage?"

"Indeed, Robin," replied his friend, George Henley, a neighbouring laird's son, "I fear the danger which Ovid represents as being all on the side of the sailors, who listened to these virgins, would, in your case, be transferred to the charmer; and yet they say that Mary Lee, with all her beauty and apparent mildness, has all the siren about her but the fledged tail; and, if the feathers are there awanting, I fear the deficiency is supplied by a sting."

The hint thrown out by Henley increased the desire of Robin to get acquainted with Mary; for such is the fate of those who are consigned to the intoxications of vice, that they indulge in morbid desires, which, as in the case of the gourmand, produce in their gratifications all the effects of poison. "A fury for a lover!" he ejaculated. "Good! I have had too many soft, breaking hearts. Their very softness has palled upon my appetite; and, as the lover of gourmandize requires stimulants to whip up the jaded powers of his overwrought stomach, my wearied heart longs for a spice of piquant amativeness, to resuscitate its flagging energies."

Such reflections are but too common with the young rakes of all times; Robin-a-Dee acted upon them, and he was not long in producing an effect upon Mary Lee. He spoke to her at first merely as the daughter of the fisherman; putting questions to her, which he could himself have answered—but, while he was apparently a careless interrogator, he did all in his power, by the shew of his properties, to become a querist of a heart which had hitherto been left to question itself, and to answer its own questions. How few young women can withstand the graces of a handsome youth—and how often is the poison drunk by the heart, before the mind is conscious of the draught! Mary Lee thought, as she looked upon the youthful Ashley, that the young fishermen of Fairhaven were surely not made of the same flesh and blood. Ashley knew the force of his natural endowments, and he brought in aid of those the flatteries of the deceiver. What more is required to complete the work of love? A good regard of the flatterer, followed by a good regard of the flattered, is, alas! often all that is necessary in the composition of female devotion.

The frequent meetings which Robin had with Mary produced the usual effects. Her heart was what every woman's ought to be—that is, if there were no bad men in the world—it loved at once and for ever. Every pulse of life acknowledged the power which had come like a spirit and thrown a charm over her existence; the world was now centred in one object; her father and her home lost their magic influences of early associations; even the shade of her mother. which was enshrined in her imagination as a part of the mind itself, faded into a thinner existence than even that of a vision, as she revelled in the first enthusiastic enjoyment of maiden affection. Ashley saw with delight, mixed with some misgivings as to the responsibility of such a devotion, the absolute resignation of a full and bursting heart to the dissembled schemes of a professed libertine. Proud of his victory, he paused, like the cruel lord of the jungle, to play with the victim destined to a protracted immolation; and she, deluded creature! received, with panting eagerness, the caresses which she considered the fruit of a love equal to her own. As she hung upon his bosom and fed his eyes with the soft beams of a first love, shining through tears of kindness and devotion, who could have observed, in that light, more danger than belongs to so innocent a thing as a woman's smile? Robert Ashley had known by experience, that a woman's eye that does not shine on her seducer, generally shines not at all, unless it be in the phosphorescent brightness of the corruption of the grave. Mary Lee was, like other women, an object to be possessed, not feared; Ashley enjoyed her present devotion in the exultation of pride, and her subsequent ruin in a certain hope of reality.

Wandering through the thick woods of "The Castle," Mary Lee drank deeper of the intoxicating draught, as her appetite was increased by the inspiring influences of romantic scenes.

"How is it, Robin," she said, with the familiarity which love begets on innocence—"how is it that now the woods of the Castle are to me so dear, and I ever think that every mavis and blackbird in the thick groves are to me little messengers o' guid news. Before you spoke to me, I was fond o' the rippling waves that come as if they were sent by the corpses in the 'dead deep,' to tell their griefs to us on land. But now my thoughts are aff the sea, and the Castle, wi' a' its braw trees and flowers, is aye present to me, as used to be the shade o' my mither."

"Thou art fond of reasons, my gentle Mary," replied Robin, "and perhaps canst say why thou wast formerly so fond of the sea. Perhaps some young fisherman had then a part of the heart which now I hope is all my own."

"An' weel, Robin, may ye say its a' yer ain," said Mary; "for, sleepin' or waukin', I think only o' you, an' the foes that wad tak you an' mak you the lover o' anither. Catherine Hamilton o' Castlegreen kenned naething o' my heart yesterday, when, as ye left the village, she saw me looking at her as she looked at you. The lady ca'ed the fisherman's dochter 'wretch,' but she heard no answer fra me. At that time you looked back to her and smiled, and she forgot me, but I will mind her to the day I dee. I could have forgiven her if she hadna been so bonny, and if ye hadna given her the glance that should have come to me. But it's only in the thick woods that Robin-a-Ree kens the fisherman's dochter o' Fairhaven."

"Come, now, my Mary, none of thy reproofs. Thou knowest that I was a favourite of Catherine Hamilton's before I knew thee, and it would not have been courteous to shake off an old acquaintance because my Mary was present and requested all my attention.

"Weel, weel, ye ken I forgive ye," answered Mary, "and my forgiveness is as real as my love, but I have ae request to mak, and that is—that, if ye dinna choose to ken me in Fairhaven when Catherine is in the village, ye will keep within the bounds o' the Castle lands. That leddie lies far out o' my way, if she crossna your path when I am near; but the blasts that blew owre the Mull o' Galloway are nae sterner to the boatmen o' the Solway than will be my scorn if she come atween me and my love."

And, as she concluded, she evinced a degree of determination in her voice and manner, which caught the attention of Ashley. But he saw nothing in it, except a little jealousy, which only measured by its intensity the strength of her love; and his pride was inflamed by the demonstration, while the ardour of his purpose was increased. Throwing his arms around the waist of the still somewhat excited maiden, he removed her jealousy by blandishments, and vowed that he had no affection for Catherine Hamilton, who could never stand in a nearer or dearer relation to him than that of acquaintanceship.

Thereafter for a long period the groves of "The Castle," were frequented by the lovers. The affection of Mary engrossed all her thoughts and feelings, and lent an eloquence to her words and looks, which, to Robin, seemed different from any demonstrations of affection he had yet witnessed. His feelings became interested to a degree beyond what he could have expected as the result of a few meetings with a fisherman's daughter; and he felt it as a reproach to his true and genuine character of libertinism, that he was in this instance more in earnest, and more sincere in his love, than he had been in any former instance. The feeling was increased by the apparent determination of Mary to defend the fortress of her virtue. The gipsy fancier had been so fortunate in his former amours, that success had made him domineering and impatient of restraint, while a firm opposition hurt his pride, and increased his desire of victory. In this instance, his love—bastard in its nature as it still was —became increased by Mary's firmness, and he was compelled to have recourse to expedients which implicated his honour in a greater degree than the ordinary schemes of the seducer, bad as they are, generally do. Finding all his endeavours to overcome her virtue unavailing, he had recourse to promises of *honourable intentions*—those fatal sappers of female innocence, which, directed only where there is strength, are relied upon as the last resources of insidious assailants.

The heart of Mary, occupied as it was with one of the strongest affections of human nature—in her instance, all-engrossing and resistless—did not so far act the traitress to her understanding, as to induce her to resign her honour, without a condition. Her youth and innocence, rendering her unacquainted with the arts of the world and its vices, suggested, as the only result of a mutual attachment, a union of the parties in holy wedlock; and, when Ashley spoke of marriage, as a thing to take place between them, after the death of his father, she only felt surprised at the ceremony being postponed. That these expectations of Mary did not please Ashley, is not unlikely; but the only other effect produced by them, was to make him promise more fervently, and with stronger protestations, that he would abide by his word, as he was a gentleman and a man of honour. Alas! the love of woman is credulous, as well as blind; and if we did not believe those who are dearest to us of all the world, who is there in it to whom faith should be given? Mary believed; and, like millions who have had the same faith, and the same apparently irrefragable grounds whereon to build it, she was undone. He who takes the honey sometimes gets the sting; the little insect which supplies the figure of speech fulfils a purpose in nature, when, after its support, during the period when no flowers exist, from which to get a supply, has been taken from it, and it is consigned to want and death, it throws away in its vengeance on the spoiler, the life which is only of use to dart the sting, and leave its spark of vitality along with the poison in the wound.

As time waned, the ruined Mary felt her passion increase and saw her lover's decay. He came now no longer to the grove where the sweet dalliance of a new passion ruffled the silence with the music of muffled sighs. She went at the accustomed hour, and at the hour not accustomed, and she returned without bringing with her a token that the hope of the morning had found a resting-place at even. The willow where they had met retained its charm, and, long after she had given up hopes of his coming, she sat under it, and wept bitterly for a loss which no power on earth could make up to her. But her tears flowed in vain—for Robin-a-Ree came not; and her groans only awakened the dull and drowsy ear of the hind, who, driving his cattle from the field, thought it strange that a woman should weep, and whistled his tune, which her sobbing had interrupted for a moment. The breaking heart of love has no consolation, unless when its sorrowful indications imitate the vulgar hues of bodily disease, and then it can command a prescription; yet sometimes it finds for itself, and in its own recesses, a poison, which has more virtue in it than all the simples of the leech.

Now a considerable time had passed without any intelligence of Ashley, when, one day, as Mary sat under the tree, she saw a gentleman approach, whom she recognised as Ashley's friend, George Henley. He accosted her in a bold and familiar style; and told her that her friend and lover had gone to Edinburgh, in the company of Miss Catherine Hamilton, and had commissioned him to yield her what consolation was in his power, in the shape of supplying his place as a new and fresh lover—a commission which he could have no inclination to disobey, when he contemplated her beauty, and recollected the favours she had bestowed on his fortunate friend. The salutation struck the unhappy girl dumb, and Henley mistook the benumbing effects of incipient despair as a passive acquiescence in his ribald sentiments—a consent to his unhallowed purposes. Under this impression, he was about to clasp his arms round her waist, when the enraged and frantic girl struck him a blow, concentrating in its force the collected strength of her frenzied energies, and stunned him beyond what could have been conceived to be the effect of a woman's uplifted arm. But injured virtue—and poor Mary Lee's feelings had still a virtue in them—has a power which proud man has been often brought to acknowledge and to feel. The cowardly braggart, only brave in pseudo love, was so tamed by the blow, and so humiliated by the noble attitude of the asserter of her dearest rights, that he slunk away as if he had been caught in an act of larceny, or stung by a serpent.

"Go," cried she, "an' tell him wha commissioned ye, how weel ye have done your duty, an' how I have performed mine. Think, as ye look on the earth—for ye canna face heaven—that there is the connach worm crawlin' amang yer feet, claimin' the kindred o' ane wha wasna formed to look in the face o' a woman! Shun, as the screech-owl does, the licht o' day, yon eagle that perches on the trystin' oak, for the gleam o' its bright e'e will, as the sun puts out the humble peat-moss ingle, blind the dastardly wretch, wha canna abide the look o' the woman he has insulted. If Robin-a-Ree sent ye to me, tell him that I have sent ye to him, to say that Mary Lee has, in the wreck o' her feelin's, enough left to fire the house an' hearth o' his new affections."

A strange speech, and delivered with the impassioned mien and voice of the Pythoness. A new and hitherto unfelt power and energy had seized the frame of this strange girl, the instinctive enthusiasm of a deep revenge had come upon her like an inspiration. She turned her eyes from the direction in which Henley had gone, and, with downcast look and a brooding melancholy, sought her home.

Thereafter, it was currently reported in the village that Robert Ashley was about to be married to Catherine Hamilton. From that period, the whole character of Mary underwent a change: she was never seen to smile, yet she never wept. Her griefs had left the heart, where they operate to soften or to break, and seized the brain, where they generate dreams of revenge, and frenzied illusions of the fancy. Her blue eye now burnt with a sterner fire than even in her former fits of anger she had ever exhibited; her demeanour, shewing fits and starts, and a general disturbance of all her feelings, told, to the most careless observer, that the change which had come over her extended to the fountain of her feelings, and the springs of her hope. Her usual sympathies seemed to be dried up, and nothing was left but the simoom of a stern and deadly hatred, which shewed itself in sudden exclamations, clenching of the hands, and wild looks. The report was soon circulated, that Mary Lee was mad; but those who knew her better, saw, in her strange conduct and demeanour, only the workings, on a larger scale, of the same spirit which had been noticed by her father at a very early period.

The rumours as to the intended marriage of Ashley were indeed true; and they were soon followed by an announcement of a more certain nature, that the marriage was to take place at "The Castle" within a month. The intelligence reached the ears of Mary; but its effect was only to add to the gloom which had apparently taken its eternal seat in her countenance. She spoke to no one of the marriage, and gave no answer when any question regarding it was proposed by the neighbours. Her father, who had watched her conduct, and suspected an undue intimacy between her and Ashley, conjectured the cause of the change that had taken place on his child; but from his knowledge of her peculiar temper, which had uniformly resisted every attempt to draw from her her secrets, or to change the character and hue of her feelings, he despaired of being able to acquire any proof of the reality of his conjecture: so he followed the course suggested by his paternal feelings, and endeavoured to soothe his daughter under her affliction, and soften the obduracy of her apparent misanthropy. His efforts were vain—the change on his daughter's heart was as complete and lasting as if it had been effected by an organic mal-disposition of its functions; her looks, and short ejaculations of bitter scorn of the higher sanctions of love or marriage, evinced a settled spirit of demoniac frenzy; every indication proved the existence of that extraordinary state of the female mind, produced by a deluded or scorned affection, when the heart, instead of giving way to the revulsion of rejected feeling, and breaking, secretes and nourishes a poison—like the saliva of the serpent which has bit itself—destructive to the destroyer and the victim.

On the day fixed for the marriage of Ashley, there were great preparations made for rejoicings at "The Castle." A dinner was prepared for the tenents on the lawn, and all males and females residing on the estate were invited to attend, to partake of the liberality of the young laird, and wish him and his lady joy. An immense number of people were collected, and the dinner was pronounced worthy of the spirit of the young bridegroom. The repast being finished, the party were regaled with drinks of various sorts; and Ashley and his bride came down from "The Castle" to witness the gay scene. Then it was resolved that the whole guests should rise with queghs in their hands, and drink to the health and happiness of the young and handsome pair. This was accordingly done; and the shouts of the boisterous labourers of the land rent the welkin in honour of the toast. Ashley rose, as his guests resumed their seats, and returned thanks for the kindness which had been exhibited to him. He made large promises of reductions of rent, when fate should be so unkind as to remove his father from this earthly scene; and told them that the man who had never broken his pledge, had that day a right to demand their faith and trust in a profession which filled the hearts of the poor farmers with joy. These sentiments were responded to by louder shouts, and a scene of joyous uproar was exhibited which had never before been witnessed from the windows of "The Castle." Ashley sat down; and, nearly opposite to the place he occupied, there was seen to rise a figure wrapped up in a cloak, as if in the attitude of one intending to address the assembly. This person was no other than Mary Lee. Pointing her finger over to Ashley, and fixing her eye with the sternness of one determined not to be shaken from a desperate purpose, she said, in a tone of voice which suited itself with wonderful pathos to the style of her speech—

"I have waited for this day, Robin-a-Ree, as I would have waited for my ain wedding—and it has come. Ye are richt to believe this man, whom ye have come to meet, and whase bread ye have broken, that he will reduce your rents; for he never broke his word."

Then there was a cry to put her down, accompanied by shouts—"We do believe our excellent landlord."

"So did I believe him," continued she, "when I put my faith and troth in his hands, and yielded to his desires, on condition o' his promise that I should stand in the place o' this braw bride. That promise he falsely broke; and will he keep that which he has this day made to ye?"

"Yes, yes!" they shouted again.

"Never!" she screamed. "Believe me, wha stand here a wretched victim o' his falsehood, whase love he sought and won, whase peace he has destroyed, whase heart he tried to break—tried—ay, but only tried; for he has changed it to the tongue o' the harry adder that basks i' the moss on the swamps o' the Ken. I have hated the yellow-wamed ask that sleeps i' the mud o' the lazy Nith, the moon-baying tyke, the charking whutthroat, and the taed that carries its poison on its back amang the seggs o' the Solway. Ay, sair, sair, have I hated them, wi' a' the hate o' a heart that had only twa pairts—ane for lovin' and ane for hatin'; but waur—ten thousand times waur, and tens o' tens, do I hate the vile and loathsome reptile, wha, puttin' on the appearance o' man, and coverin' his lyin' tongue wi' the Almighty's words o' promised faith, wiles frae the trustin', lovin', defenceless woman a' that she has to care for on earth, and wha yet hasna courage enough to stab her to the heart, and end her misery and her life thegither. But, thanks to the power wha befriends the miserable, and brings oot o' the destroyed a spirit a thousand times stronger, to feed the heart which love has betrayed!—sweeter to me—ay, hear me, hear the victim o your worshipped idol—sweeter to me is that poison than would be to me his kisses, now sour as the green bullister. But the day lengthens frae the shortest to the longest, and, as the earth turns, they wha, but some hours syne, stood upon oor heads, shall as mony hours after, lie under our feet. So may the day o' Mary Lee's joy follow the nicht o' her grief—and that joy will be revenge!"

As the last word, "revenge," (says our legend) rang round the silent scene, the excited damsel waved her hand and disappeared. The effect of her speech was electric. Every one looked at his neighbour, mutterings and whisperings ran round the company, and glances of a suspicious nature were thrown upon Ashley. Some of his friends, for the sake of saving him, suggested that the woman was insane; and the company, glad to find a pretext for disbelieving the charge brought in so extraordinary a manner against their landlord, adopted the suggestion. Ashley, however, was struck deeper than he would avow, or than might have been expected, in the case of a man dead to ordinary pity, and to the moral sense. Rising from his seat, he again thanked the company for their attention, and retired.

Next day a messenger called at the house of Mary's father, and requested to see her. He was commissioned, he said, to give her—provided she would receive it with grace and favour—renouncing the ill-will she bore to Ashley—a considerable sum of money, amounting to two hundred merks. Contrary to the man's own expectation, the girl seized the money with the greatest avidity ; but without uttering a syllable wherefrom he might draw an inference that she was placated in any degree by the gift. As soon as he retired, she locked the money in her trunk, apostrophising the despised and worshipped dust, with the spirit of an enraptured Mammon—"Lie there till vengeance needs ye."

Time rolled on without producing any change on Mary Lee. At "The Castle," things were different. The old man died, and Robert succeeded to the estates. He gradually softened down to the condition of a sober-minded husband, and experienced the ordinary effects of early ribaldry and dissipation, in a deep, heart-felt regret, and a wish to make amends to heaven and earth for an abuse of the gifts of both. He had one son, whose name was Hector, whom he loved with all the devotion of a father. Being an only son, the boy was, as usual, spoiled, both by his father and mother ; having concentrated on himself affections which, in other circumstances, might have been, with advantage to parents and child, spread over a family of sons and daughters. To such an extent was affection carried, in the case of this spoiled child, that the mother would scarcely let him out of her sight. With his heart also garnered up in his son, and happy in the possession of a kind, gentle, though constitutionally weak wife, Robert Ashley might have been pronounced as happy as the regret produced by the loss of the best part of his life would permit him to be.

Meanwhile, as regarded the victim of his seduction, Ashley conceived he had now little to fear, seeing she had received his peace-offering, and had, it was reported, contracted an intimacy with Hans Gerstendorf, a German smuggler, who had been in the practice of running his good frau, *Unsere Mutter*, an old lugger, into the port of Fairhaven, with contraband goods. The report was, to a certain extent, true. Hans had conceived an affection for the still beautiful Mary, and it was certain that she had, in some degree, unbent her stern misanthropy in favour of the German, though with what aim, or for what object, the gossips of Fairhaven knew not. It was not without credence among some, that Hans, whose appearance justified the suspicion, had used some unlawful means—and fancy supplied German charms—to open the heart which all supposed shut against human efforts. Speculation, however, might rack itself with curiosity—Mary's attentions to the foreigner remained unaccounted for. She often visited his craft, and this supplied others, less indulgent, with the idea that the German charm was nothing else than good Hollands; yet those who knew Mary Lee better ridiculed the suspicion as unworthy of her character; for her sobriety, in the midst of her unearthly feelings, was never questioned. One thing, amidst all this doubt, remained certain, and that was that, whatever favour Hans Gerstendorf had in the eyes of the relentless fair one, no other person ever saw her smile, and few heard her speak. The same gloomy melancholy haunted her, the same bitterness of scorn of all social relations, was observable in her eye, and trembled on her lip.

On a day, a horseman, well-mounted, arrived in Fairhaven, in a state of breathless anxiety and haste. He called for a number of the fishermen of the village, and requested them to fly with him to the Fisher's Cairn, a mile beyond the village, to give them assistance in searching for the body of Hector Ashley, who, he said, had fallen into the Solway, and was supposed to have perished. Then the fishermen seized their dead drags, and ran with their greatest speed to the place pointed out. On arriving there, they found a number of persons collected, among whom was Robert Ashley, apparently occupied in searching for the body of the drowned youth. The clothes of the boy lay on the top of the cairn, from whence it was supposed and reported that he had been bathing, at that part of the Solway which was full of dangerous eddies, and had perished. The father stood in a state bordering on despair, witnessing the unavailable efforts, on the part of the people, to recover his son. Every exertion was used—the dead drags applied in every direction—and the fatal announcement made, that the body was irrecoverable. The tide was receding, and it was the opinion of the fishermen, that the body must have been carried, by the eddies, into some of the deep clefts of the rock, from which it was, in all likelihood, impossible to extricate it. The people gradually disappeared, with the exception of one or two, who undertook to wait the receding of the tide; and Robert Ashley, the disconsolate parent, was conveyed home, in a state of insensibility, to witness the second grief of a mother wailing for the loss of her only child. As the carriage which conveyed Ashley home passed through the village, Mary Lee was sitting, in her usual melancholy mood, at her father's door. On observing the crowd, she suddenly started up, and, with a loud laugh, pointed to Ashley, and retreated into the house. The circumstance caught the attention of the crowd, and formed a part of the melancholy theme which fate had supplied to the evening gossips of Fairhaven. Some hours afterwards, it was reported that the tide had receded to its utmost extent, and no trace could be found of the lost heir of "The Castle."

The conduct of Mary Lee had given rise to suspicions of her being in some way, connected with the death of Hector Ashley; and an investigation was, by the orders of the father, set about, with the view of ascertaining what grounds there existed for these suspicions. It was, however, clearly ascertained that Mary Lee had not been out of her father's house for hours preceding the disappearance of the unfortunate boy, and the inquiry was relinquished. No hope was now entertained that any less disastrous fate had befallen him than being drowned, while in the act of bathing, a recreation he had been in the habit of indulging in unknown to his mother, who had enjoined the strictest prohibition against it.

The effect of this calamity, on the mind of Mrs Ashley, was such as to produce strong apprehensions of the most dangerous consequences. No consolation could be administered to her with the slightest chance of abating a grief which had sunk too deep for human aid to relieve. After some months, it was discovered that a hereditary tendency to consumption had received a fatal increase of strength, from the decayed state of her constitution; and the disease having progressed with that rapidity so often observed to be one of its most appalling symptoms, the bereaved mother breathed her last in the arms of the fate-stricken and inconsolable husband.

It was on a rainy day, in December, that the remains of Mrs Ashley were to be conveyed to her father's vault, a few miles distant from "The Castle;" a large cavalcade of mourners attended; the funeral was conducted with a state and pomposity suited to the rank of the deceased; the procession glided silently along, by a road passing through the dark forests of "The Castle," and by that spot where the unhappy victim of Ashley's perfidy resigned her honour and her peace for ever. The trysting-tree was still there, with its branches bending under a load of December snows, which the thaw had not yet been able to dissolve. There Mary Lee took her station; and, as the mournful procession passed, the woods resounded with the same wild laugh that had met the ear of Ashley, on the disappearance of his son.

Years rolled on, but the bereaved husband and father finds little assuasive power in the effects of time. Robert Ashley experienced this melancholy truth, and sought assistance from a fountain, the perennial consolations of which flow over the hearts of the rich and the poor. The extraordinary manner in which the early victim of his heartless seduction had triumphed over his misfortunes, appeared to him as the supernatural effect of Divine retribution. The idea haunted him like the invertible companions of Orestes. A deep melancholy took possession of his spirits, and made its usual inroads upon a constitution which early vices and unprecedented bereavements had made susceptible of the despoiling ravages of disease. His mind became occupied with a presentiment that the death of every member of his family would alone atone for the ruin he had brought on that individual, whose fate seemed to have constituted her an avenger of wrongs, only to be expiated by the greatest of misfortunes, visited on the head of him who had blasted the prospects of one of God's creatures, aud expelled his victim from the sanctuary of grace.

It was in these states of bodily disease and mental dejection, that the proud lord of "The Castle" was brought to feel not only what it is to be a man, but a sinner. He felt how vain were all the advantages of fortune when they are not accompanied by peace of mind. The woods around the Castle used to afford him a retreat from the fevered excitements of gay life. The song of the blackbird, full, mellow, and sorrowful, soothed the ear which had been poisoned by the flatteries incident to favoured sons of fortune. The merry *reveillé* of the lark banished unpleasant recollections; many a sigh was drowned in the rich flow of the music of the thrush. All these things were experienced with joy and satisfaction, when the silent energies of health and youth made his muscular limbs jump with the exuberance of animal spirits. They were welcomed as good tidings when no pang of aroused conscience stung him with its peculiar pain, and no morbid fancy made to dance in the green woods the images of misery he had brought on the hearts of unsuspecting victims.

Now, all was changed when he rode out in those beautiful retreats—the pleasure he formerly derived from them was the parent of the evil he now felt. The contrast was itself a grievous pain; he would have been happier in the abodes of sorrow. Pleasure is not the soother of griefs, that ask the nourishment of a morbid appetite for an accession of woe. It is a cataplasm applied to a sore, under the mistaken idea that its softness will atone for the pungency produced, not from its own asperity, but the tenderness of the part diseased. The joys of "The Castle" were now dead to its lord. If the soothing influences of rural scenery, with its rough hills and soft valleys; its trees, plants, flowers, and tuneful birds, could not assuage the pangs of a diseased body, a bereaved heart, and an awakened conscience—what could be expected from the entertainments of the Castle? Ashley knew too well the vanity of these, even in the heyday of youth, health, and pleasure, to have recourse to them when his views were blasted, and his hopes had fallen. All company he avoided; and no attempt, on the part of the surrounding gentry, or his old friends, was available in getting him to relax the rigid discipline of sorrow which he had, in his despair, imposed on himself.

As he rode out, for the benefit of the air, he was always under an apprehension. Vague fears, the result of an evil conscience, haunted him. The rustle of a leaf disturbed him, and the slouching, fearful look he threw on intruders on his solitary walk, were in sad contrast with the proud bearing of the once eagle-eyed lord of the proudest castle on the western marches. His timidity rendered him incapable of managing his horse—a proud creature, which vindicated the untainted character of its stock, under the crestfallen demeanour of its once haughty master. In going over a small fence, he one day fell into an old ditch, and the weakness to which he was reduced prevented him from rising. In this condition, Mary Lee, in one of her wandering fits, came upon him.

"I wish ye joy," she commenced, "o' the elevated position ye occupy in the heart o' yer ain wuds."

"Away, woman!" cried Ashley, "art thou not already avenged?" and, trying to raise himself, he fell back with his eye still fixed on the fury.

"No," she replied; "he who exalteth himself shall be debased. and he who humbleth himself shall be raised. Ye have lang inhabited a proud castle; but fate, wha richts the oppressed, can mak the craven-hearted, dastardly betrayer o' woman's troth, lie whar the meg-o'-mony-feet crawls, and the green and yellow carrion courts the slimy mouth o' the adder. A short distance frae this, ye lay wi' me on a green bank, whar roses encircled us wi' their sweet-scented flavours, and poured into my credulous ear the poison o' your love. A stagnant ditch now contains your diseased body, and the hisses o' the vengeance o' a ruined woman pierce and wound the ear that was ance charmed wi' her honied love."

She paused, as if to gloat her eyes with the writhings of her victim—then resumed:

"Twice have I lauched o'er your misfortunes; a third opportunity has gratified a heart only prevented frae breaking by the wish I hae lang nourished, to see the auld taff o' the kirkyard cover the moil that will keep ye frae the sicht o' her ye hae ruined. Mary Lee has naething now but the wishes o' a revengeful heart, and this spittle she throws on the reptile that stung her honour, and made her fame bleed and perish, to show that a woman is no without a part o' that power that is vouchsafed to the trampled worm."

As the infuriated creature finished these words, she spat on the poor victim of her hatred, now unable even to reply to her dreadful expressions of a morbid thirst for revenge. Having thus gratified her passion, she disappeared among the woods. Ashley lay for a considerable time, before assistance came to him. His feelings may be conceived—they cannot be expressed. His conscience was enough for him, without the exhibition of so deadly a hatred in her whom he now pitied. The reaction of injured virtue overcame him. He groaned in the depth of his agony; burning tears of remorse flowed down his cheeks; the pains and penalties of vice stung him in mind and body, with the malignity of demons; he would have given the proud domains of his forefathers, for one drop of mercy to his burning soul. He tried to pray; he was unable. The fiends still clung to him. The Almighty did not think it time to pluck them away. In his struggles, he fainted, and lay on the cold earth for several hours.

The servants of the Castle came out to seek their master. They searched the woods, and found the horse which had strayed away from him. His groans attracted their notice; and, in the plight we have described, they found their unhappy lord. When taken home, he was put to bed, where he lay for some months. The aids of ministers of religion afforded him consolation, but were ineffectual in banishing the presentiment which had taken so firm a hold of his imagination. They recommended to him travel; and he consented to remove to France, where the change of scene might produce its accustomed effects, in withdrawing his mind from the contemplation of a subject which preyed on his vitals. Arrangements were made for the journey, and everything was ready for his departure; but the journey which was destined for the unhappy victim of his own crimes, was of a different kind from that he had in view. On the day on which he was to depart, he was seized with a hæmorrhage from the lungs, and died before any medical advice could be afforded him.

In a moonlight night, some weeks after the interment, Mary Lee stood upon the grave of Robert Ashley.

"The proud Eagle," she soliloquized, "wha condescended to come to earth only for garbage, now lies whar I have lang wished him to be. Robert Ashley has met his deserts, an' nae tear has wet the cheek o' Mary Lee. Na — that tear shall only be the clammy rheum that oozes frae the closing ee o' death, and only maks the cheek o' the heart-broken mair dry. Did I no say, that I hated the connach worm? Ay, but I, wha have nae love for mortal on earth, could love that creature now, for it will nestle in the heart o' my destroyer e'en whar I have nestled. Fear nae guile now, ye brawnet reptile—that was a' wasted in my ruin; an' bluid will be your repast as it has been my vengeance. Thrice have I lauched in triumph; an' I would lauch my loud lauch again, if Robin's ears war open to hear't; but I have yet anither victim, and my last shout shall be o'er the fate o' the remainin' rafter o' the ruif tree o' the auld Castle. Then shall be the weird o' my hatred fulfilled, and' the staff o' the stern wizard, wha guides me on through the dark ways o' revenge, be broken an' cast on the waters of the Solway."

As Mary was in the act of pronouncing the last words of her speech, she was interrupted by a voice, apparently that of a man. It was Gerstendorf, who had not been in these parts for many years. He seemed in great agitation, and spoke confusedly, and as if in fear of being over-heard.

"What brings ye here, man, wi' that craven look, and these broken sounds?" inquired Mary.

"What may that be to you, mein gut child? Donner! have I no power left to look after mein safety, and by returning the knabe, Hector Ashley, to the house of his vater, get a riddence of the outlawry against me and mein crew?"

"Hans Gerstendorf," replied Mary, "is this the faith pledged to me langsyne, when I put into your hand twa hunder siller merks, as the apprentice fee o' Hector Ashley, and the reward o' eternal silence as to his birth and lineage ? This may be German troth, but it belangs na to the honour o' Galloway."

"The faith, and the promise, and the covenant," replied the German, "belong to the men who live under the laws —Teufel ! are not the sharks and the hounds, by the sea and by the land, smelling for us and baying for us ?—and doesna the hang-tief stand on the lang sands o' Leith to mak langer, by twa inches, the craigs o' the pirate and his gang ? Ha ! mein gut Maria, what is the troth to the life, the breath, and the soul that kensna repentance for ten thousand crimes ?—One chance is left, and that is, to tell Peter Fleming the secret o' his parentage, and his history, from that day when I kidnapped him at the Fisherman's Cairn, and left his cla'es on the stones to beguile his father. Once in the Castle and we are safe."

The resolution, intention, or wish, thus expressed by the German, deeply affected Mary. For some time she replied not—her hand was on her forehead, and she was apparently musing in deep thought ; at last she started.

"Weel, weel," she said, in a choked voice—"weel, since it is as ye say, that your lives are in danger, let your way be as ye wish. But whar are ye concealed ?"

And, as she put the question, her eye watched the looks of the German.

"My men are amang the high bent that grows on the drifted sand, twa miles doun the coast. But wha is now the proprietor o' 'The Castle ?' for I maun tell Peter the name of the man wha is to be his enemy ; and we may hae to fecht our way to head-quarters."

"There is naebody in the House," answered Mary.

"Blut ! that is the good tidings," ejaculated Hans, in joy. "Hurra, then, for the Castle !" And he dashed through the willows that overhung the burial-ground, where they stood.

On that night, three hours after, intelligence was said to have been given by Mary Lee to the procurator-fiscal of the stewartry, that the outlawed pirates lay in the sea bent at the banks of the Solway. A band of armed men repaired to the place, and Hans Gerstendorf and his men, among whom was Peter Fleming, no other than Hector Ashley, were seized and put in irons, and carried to the jail of Dumfries. The unhappy men were afterwards removed to the jail of Edinburgh, tried, and four of them, including Fleming, condemned to be executed on the sands of Leith, for the crime of piracy on the high seas. They were executed accordingly.

A new family came to occupy "The Castle"—far removed in relationship to the Ashleys. Mary Lee continued to live on, for many years, exhibiting the same peculiarities of character—the same silence—the same scorn of social relations. Her desire of revenge was satisfied—but that satisfaction was no more effectual, in its assuaging consequences, than revenge is generally found to be. It even added to her moroseness; for the evil which she had removed, had been the only good she ever enjoyed, and the thirst for revenge which she had indulged, when slaked by the blood of all her enemies, left her nothing to wish for in the world. She took no interest in passing events, and as she increased in years, her faculties decayed. Latterly, and towards the termination of her life, she fell into temporary fits of insanity—which, however, did not conceal from her all her sorrows, for her lucid intervals were periods of misery; all her recollections seemed painful as the searing-iron of a roused conscience; she never displayed a symptom of remorse for the dreadful vengeance she had taken on the head and house of her seducer; but the wild laugh would break out only to settle again in the stare of idiotcy. So much for our legend.

THE LORD OF HERMITAGE.

Great was the surprise of the peaceful congregation assembled in the little church of Ettleton, in Liddisdale, on a Sunday forenoon, somewhere about one hundred and fifty years since, to see the Lord of Hermitage come in amongst them, just as the service of the day had begun. A surprise this, not without good and sufficient cause; for, although the patron of the parish, and living in the immediate neighbourhood of the church just named, the Lord of Hermitage had not entered it for many a long year. Some of those present thought it not unlikely, that he had begun to repent of his ways, which were, indeed, evil—for a vicious, dissolute, and tyrannical man was he—dreaded and detested by all who knew him; and that his coming to church, on this occasion, was not improbably meant as a public intimation of his having commenced the work of reformation; and that it might, therefore, be looked upon as the first overt act of contrition. Others, incredulous of so sudden a conversion in a man so notorious for his wickedness, dreaded that his appearance, on this occasion, boded no good; although they could not conjecture, either, how any evil should arise from it.

In the meantime, while all eyes were fixed on him, the dreaded Lord of Hermitage, slightly bowing to the officiating clergyman, took a seat and seemed to listen for some time, with decent attention, to his discourse. But it was only for a short time that he continued to exhibit this becoming respect for the devotional proceedings that were going forward. His eye was soon observed wandering over the assembly, as if in search of some object, and was at length seen fixed, with a steady and insolent gaze, on the beautiful countenance of Isabella Foster, the daughter of a respectable farmer, and one of his own tenants, who resided in the lower part of Liddisdale. In this circumstance, simple as it was, or rather would have been, but for the well-known character of the Lord of Hermitage, some of the congregation felt assured that they had discovered the secret of his appearance amongst them on this occasion, while all considered it matter for strong suspicion of evil intentions.

Isabella Foster was, on this occasion, accompanied by her father and her acknowledged lover—a young man of considerable property, but who was, nevertheless, much better known in the country by the familiar, Border-like soubriquet of "Jock o' the Syde," than by his real name, which was Armstrong. Isabella herself marked, and she did so with fear and trembling, the ominous gaze of the unprincipled Lord of Hermitage; and she clung closer and closer to her father and her lover, both of whom were also aware of the circumstance at which she was so much alarmed. Her father saw it with a feeling of dread and horror; for he knew well the infamous character of the man, and he knew, too, that he would perpetrate any villany, and have recourse, without the smallest hesitation or compunction, to any measures, however violent or atrocious, to accomplish the gratification of his passions; and he felt how vain would be all his precautions, how unavailing all the means he could employ, to defeat the designs of a man at once so determined, so unprincipled, and so powerful.

On her lover, however, the discovery that his Isabella had attracted the special notice of the Lord of Hermitage had a different effect. It roused his young blood; and in the look with which he contemplated him, as he gazed upon her, there was plainly to be read a proud defiance at once of his personal prowess and his power. Armstrong felt, at that moment, that his single arm, furnished with his own good sword, was alone sufficient to protect his lover from all the Lords of Hermitage that ever existed, although they all came upon him in a bundle.

With more experience of the world, Isabella's father, as we have shown, thought and reasoned differently. He feared the worst; and these fears were much increased when, on the dismissal of the congregation, the Lord of Hermitage rode up to him, complimented him on the beauty of his daughter, and he told him that he meant to do himself the pleasure of paying him a visit soon, when he hoped, he said—at the same time turning towards and bowing to Isabella—that the fair Lily of Liddisdale would not be absent.

Isabella's father made no further reply to this remark, than by bowing politely, and saying, with equivocal hospitality, that his house should always be open to the Lord of Hermitage.

Isabella's lover, who was also of the party on this occasion, mechanically felt for the hilt of his sword, while this conversation was passing—a motion which did not escape the notice of him who had excited such an evidence of hostile feeling; neither did the stern look, with which he contemplated the speaker, pass unobserved.

"What chafes thee so much, young man?" said the Lord of Hermitage, turning to the person whom he addressed, with a contemptuous smile. "Is yon fair maiden your sweetheart, my flint-spark; and are you afraid I shall run away with her?"

"No names, if you please, my Lord Hermitage," replied Armstrong; "I take no by-names but one—that by which everybody knows me. All others I am apt to acknowledge in a way that is pretty generally allowed to be disagreeable. And as to this lady being my sweetheart," he went on—"perhaps she is, and perhaps not; but whether she be or no, should you entertain any thoughts of running away with her, take my word for it—take the word of 'Jock o the Syde'—that you'll run pretty fast, and pretty far, too, if I don't overtake you."

To this blunt language, the Lord of Hermitage merely replied, evidently desirous of giving the whole matter the turn of a joke, "that he was glad to find the young lady had such a redoubtable guardian." Having said this, and made his obeisance to Isabella, bowed to her father, and waved his hand slightly and coldly to Armstrong, the Lord of Hermitage rode off towards his own residence, whither we shall take the liberty of accompanying him.

On entering the gate of his castle, the Lord of Hermitage was met by a person who seemed to be a retainer—for such his dress bespoke him; but there was a familiarity in his manner, mingled with a sort of careless respect, that at once shewed that his lord and he were upon a much more intimate footing than is usually displayed between master and servant.

"Well, my lord," said this person, as he assisted his master to dismount, "have you seen her?"

"I have, Maxwell," replied the Lord of Hermitage; "and, on my soul, a most lovely creature it is. Strange that I should not have heard of her before. Thou hast an admirable taste, Maxwell," he went on; "and I owe thee something for this scent, which thou shalt forthwith have. 'Tis a rare prize, Maxwell, I assure thee, and does thy diligence infinite credit."

"I guessed as much," replied the person addressed, and who was, if such an official can be recognised, the confidential villain of the Lord of Hermitage, in the shape of a domestic servant or personal attendant—"I guessed as much, my lord," he said, with a fiendish smile; I felt assured that I had at last caught something worth looking at."

Here the conversation dropped for a time. The Lord of

Hermitage being now dismounted from his horse, proceeded into the castle, whither he was followed by Maxwell; when the two, having shut themselves up in a small retired apartment, resumed the discourse which the movement just spoken of had interrupted; and proceeded to discuss the question as to which was the best method of getting Isabella Foster into their power.

"Carry her off, to be sure—carry her off bodily," was the reply of Maxwell to this query—"why should there be any hesitation?"

"Why, I don't know, Maxwell," replied the Lord of Hermitage, musingly. "It would make a stir in the country, and set the fools a-talking. I'd rather it were quietly done, if at all possible. I have told Foster," he added, after a pause of some minutes, "that I would pay him a visit one of these days."

"Then, my lord, excuse me, you were wrong," said Maxwell, interrupting him—"you were wrong. He'll bundle the girl out of the way directly; and, if he does, we may look long enough ere we find her again."

"Faith! I dare say, thou'rt right, Maxwell," replied the Lord of Hermitage; "although I scarcely think the scoundrel would dare to do that either. I should have a right to consider such a proceeding as a personal insult, and feel myself warranted in resenting it accordingly."

"No doubt, no doubt, my lord," said Maxwell; "but, in the meantime, observe you, the girl may be gone—a loss, this, for which the satisfaction of running her father through the body, would be but an indifferent compensation."

"Right again, Maxwell, right again," replied his master; "why, then, suppose after all, we do the thing boldly and at once." A proposition, this, which ended in an arrangement that the Lord of Hermitage, accompanied by Maxwell, and other three or four trusty knaves, well armed with concealed weapons, should, on the following day, set out for Foster's residence, and, seizing a fit opportunity, carry off his daughter.

On the day following, accordingly, a party of five horsemen were seen, towards evening, riding up the avenue, at the head of which Foster's house was situated; when the latter, having observed them approaching, and recognising the Lord of Hermitage amongst them, hastened out to receive them. On their coming up—

"I promised you a visit, Foster," said the leader of the party, at the same time flinging himself from his horse; "and I am now come to redeem my promise."

Foster made no reply, but bowed and requested his visitor to walk in, an invitation with which he immediately complied; but when a similar one was extended to his followers, they, one and all, declined, saying that their master intended staying so short a time, that it was not worth their while dismounting—an apology with which Foster was, at the time, satisfied, although some circumstances soon afterwards occurred that made him doubt its sincerity. One of them was, his observing two of the horsemen who *had* dismounted, notwithstanding what they had said just a moment before, skulking about the door of the apartment in which he and his guest were.

After the latter had sat for some time, and had partaken of some refreshment that had been introduced, he inquired of his entertainer, with affected carelessness, what had become of his "fair daughter." Foster replied that she was unwell, and confined to her own apartment; which was, indeed, true.

"Unwell!" exclaimed his guest, starting to his feet; "you do not say so! Ha! unwell!—I must see her, then. Perhaps I may be able to restore her to health. I have some skill in the healing art. Come, Foster," he added, with a sudden ferocity and determination of manner, which contrasted strongly with the benevolent purpose he affected, "conduct me to her this instant—this instant, I say, Foster." And he drew a sword from beneath the cloak in which he was enveloped.

"What means this conduct, my lord?" inquired his amazed and alarmed host.

"Mean, sirrah! mean!" replied the Lord of Hermitage—"why, it means that I am about to do your daughter an honour." And, without waiting for the guidance he had demanded, he rushed out of the apartment—when he was instantly joined by two of his followers, with drawn swords in their hands—and proceeded to search for the chamber in which the object of his villany was confined. Having quickly found the apartment, the ruffians, after in vain soliciting admittance from its inmate, whom the previous noise had alarmed, began to force the doors. While they were thus employed, Foster, who had, in the meantime, armed himself, and brought two or three of his men to his assistance, suddenly rushed in amongst the assailants, and a close and sanguinary contest immediately ensued.

At this moment, the unfortunate young lady, hearing her father's voice raised in anger, and the clashing of swords in the passage which led to her apartment, undid the door, and frantically rushed into the midst of the conflict. Fatal indiscretion! She had scarcely stepped from her room, when the thrust of a sword (not, however, meant for her) reached her heart, and she fell, lifeless, amongst the feet of the combatants.

In a few seconds afterwards, her unhappy father also fell, mortally wounded; when the fiends, perceiving the purposes of their villany thus fearfully frustrated, instantly quitted the house, mounted their horses, and fled.

This new atrocity of the Lord of Hermitage—for he had been guilty of many, although, perhaps, this was the most hideous of all—excited, when it became known, such a universal feeling of horror throughout the country, that the miscreant, powerful as he was, was obliged to fly the kingdom, and betake himself to a foreign land, to avoid the popular vengeance with which he was threatened. But his crime was of too deep a dye to escape due punishment, even on earth. There was one whose fierce and enduring thirst for revenge he could not evade—one to escape whom all his windings and doublings were vain, and from whose arm, neither distance of place or time could ultimately protect him.

On hearing of the dreadful catastrophe, Isabella's lover, Armstrong, vowed he would have a deadly revenge, and that he would never cease from the pursuit of the Lord of Hermitage, while both remained in life, till he had accomplished his destruction; and, in pursuance of this oath, (which he swore on the grave of his lover,) he abandoned home and friends, assumed the habit of a palmer, and set out in quest of the murderer of Isabella Foster and her father.

On leaving the country, the infamous Lord of Hermitage directed his steps to London, where he remained for some time in concealment; for the singular atrocity of his crime, which he had no doubt would soon be known far and wide, made him consider himself unsafe, even in the heart of the English capital; and unsafe, even here, he certainly was, although unaware of the particular character of the danger that threatened him; for Armstrong had traced him, and he only escaped him by the chance circumstance of his leaving London for the Continent, one single day before his pursuer had discovered his retreat. Similar fortuitous circumstances saved him, at various subsequent terms in the chase; but the bloodhound that tracked him, though often thrown out, kept steadily to his purpose, and as often regained as he lost the scent of his victim.

For two full years, the lover of Isabella Foster pursued her murderer with unabated eagerness and unflagging zeal; and, for two full years, the former, from various accidental circumstances, escaped the vengeance that was thus, although unknown to him, so closely pursuing him.

At the expiry of these two years, however, the Lord of Hermitage, guided, in some measure, we suppose, by a similar instinct with that which directs the hare back to her form, however wide and numerous may have been the evolutions of her intermediate career, sought his own castle again; entertaining also, doubtless, a hope that his atrocious crime, though it could not possibly be forgotten, would now be contemplated with less intensity of feeling than on its first occurrence.

It was on a dark and stormy night in November, that he arrived at his own gate on horseback, and alone. Their lord's return being wholly unexpected by his domestics, he had some difficulty in gaining admittance; but having at length satisfied the porter who kept the gate, that he was indeed his master, the former was thrown open; and, all dripping with wet, and perishing with cold, the Lord of Hermitage once more entered his own castle, where, in the enjoyment of the luxuries of a blazing fire and an ample repast, he quickly forgot the sufferings to which, for the last ten or twelve hours, he had been exposed.

In little more than an hour afterwards, however, the Lord of Hermitage's arrival was followed by that of another person, who rode furiously up to the gate, and inquired, in an eager and anxious tone, if he had yet appeared. Being answered in the affirmative, the stranger called on the porter to open the gate, saying that he was an attendant of his master's, whom the latter had hired some days previously, and that he had lost both him and his way in the dark, being a stranger in that part of the country. The man's story was plausible; and he was instantly admitted. On entering the court-yard, and seeing some lights in the windows that overlooked it, the stranger inquired of the person who admitted him, whether any one, and which of these windows belonged to his master's sleeping apartment. The porter, naturally thinking that the question was put by the stranger with the view of affording his master his services, pointed out the apartment he inquired after, and gave him particular directions how to find it. Desiring his informant now to hold his horse for a few minutes, till he should have informed his master of his arrival, when he would return, he said, to take charge of the animal himself, the stranger disappeared. In an instant after, the door of the Lord of Hermitage's apartment was suddenly opened, and "Jock o' the Syde" stood before its horror-struck inmate, who at once guessed the intentions of the intruder. What followed was the work of a moment. Armstrong—his eyes dilated with a fearful joy, and with a deadly smile playing on his haggard countenance, seized the unhappy Lord of Hermitage by the throat; and, as he struck a dagger to his heart, exclaimed—"Villain! most atrocious of villains! the hour of vengeance is come. I have caught thee at last. This, and this, and this," he said, as he repeated his stabs, "is for Isabella Foster and her murdered father!"

Elated beyond bounds at this successful termination to all his weary toils and watchings, and gratified to think that his vengeance had been, after all, consummated in the very stronghold of the murderer, Armstrong flew to the court-yard, leaped on his horse, and having called to the porter, in a voice of fierce exultation, to open the gate, as his master had ordered him on a pressing and important mission, "Jock o' the Syde" galloped out of the castle, and his loud and triumphant, but most appalling laugh, as he cleared the gate-way, rang wildly through the darkness and solitude of the night, and struck those who heard it with awe and dismay; for it was, indeed, unearthly.

GLEANINGS OF THE COVENANT.

XVIII.—KINALDY.

Kinaldy is now the property of Mr Purves—an excellent country gentleman who has made an ample fortune in America; but the period to which my narrative refers, was long prior to this. The property is poor and moorish though now covered with wood, sheltered, and highly cultivated. In the days of Andrew Watson, it bore a very different appearance: in fact, Andrew was not the proprietor, but only the farmer; whilst a nephew of Archbishop Sharp, long resident in an asylum, was the nominal proprietor, under various trustees, of whom the famous Archbishop was one.

Farm houses in those days were very different from those of the present. A thatched and patched roof, with walls of alternate layers of turf and stone, and mid-walls or hallens of clay and straw, quite Egyptian manufacture, were all the go; and if any one, more advanced and uppish than his neighbours, got the length of a stone and clay wall, with a wooden partition within, he was deemed uncommonly appointed, as times went. Through these stone and turf walls there was free ingress and egress to the wind, as well as a plentiful allotment of rats, and the light infantry, the mice; and holes capable of admitting even the cat in full chase of her prey, perforated the clayey hallen in particular. Thus, by little and little, the frail separation betwixt but and ben—the house and the cha'mer—was in a manner undermined; and even the pressure of a little urchin's elbow, of eight or ten years of age, was sufficient to shake it to its foundation. It is of one such as I am describing, that the author of Maggy Lauder speaks, when he makes his jolly heroine contemptuously exclaim—

"Begone ye hallenshauker,"

in other words, ye puir contemptible body, whom no respectable person will permit to advance further into their house than the hallen, against which ye loiter and lean till it shakes.

The fire, in these times, occupied, like the sun, the centre of the system, around which, at various distances, revolved, the Venus guidwife, the Mars guidman, the Juno Jenny, the Jupiter Jock, the Saturn Sandy, and a vast number of satellites, in the shape of half-clad, bare-footed, uncombed, squalling brats. Pocket handkerchiefs there were none; but coat-sleeves and petticoat tails did just as well; and though the Kenley Burn ran past, pure and pellucid, its waters were seldom defiled—unless perhaps, on a church-going Sunday—with the ablution of hands and faces. There was a byre covered with heath, and with rafters fixed in the earth, without the advantage of walls, from which issued, in their season, cows, stirks, and calves, all covered over, like the Dacians, in scaly armour, rattling as they went in hardened shairn, and sometimes carrying a considerable fragment of the door-head of their cabin along with them; ducks swattered in a Glenburnie midden dub; and an assortment of hens, over whom presided a most dignified cock in full feather, giving an air of extreme liveliness and stir to the whole. But although the outside of things was, comparatively with modern manners and improvements, somewhat rude and forbidding, there were warm hearts and tender consciences within. There literature was indeed but limited; but, limited as it was, it comprehended the Bible, the Confession of Faith, and "Knox's History of the Church of Scotland." Well acquainted was Andrew Watson, and so was his wife, Janet Morrison, with the grievous defections and oppressions of the times. And never did Andrew bend his knees in family worship, but he prayed the Lord in behoof of the poor persecuted remnant, of the good and faithful Mr Alexander Wilson, the ousted minister of Cameron, and of a' those that opposed Prelacy and conformity, and supported Presbytery, in thae sairly afflicted lands.

It was half-past one o'clock, on as beautiful a 3rd of May as ever burst, in glory and in song, upon the kingdom of Fife, in the year of grace 1679, when Peggy Watson—a girl about fourteen years of age, and daughter to the above-mentioned Andrew—entered her father's door in a dreadful state of affright. It was some time before the poor girl could be brought to utter any coherent sounds at all; at last, she said that she and Tam Cargill, a neighbour's boy had been amusing themselves in seeking for birds' nests on Drumcarrow Craig, when she saw a number of men on horseback gathered round the tall ash tree, at the farm of Magus. By and by, a gentleman's servant passed them on horseback, and then a fine coach appeared, drawn by six horses. When the coach passed, (she said,) the men under the tree set off at full gallop after it; and she heard firing, and loud speaking, and saw the coach overtaken, and stopped, and a man dragged out of it, and shot at, and murdered—she was quite sure that he was murdered. Thereupon, Tam Cargill had run off homewards in one direction, and she in another; for she was afraid the dreadful men might look up at Drumcarrow Craig, and murder her and her companion too. This narrative caused a great sensation in the family, and Andrew was at a loss how to understand it; for, although the archbishop's treachery and cruelty were well known in the country, yet the more immediate object of popular detestation was Mr William Carmichael, sheriff-substitute of Fife, from whose hornings, and finings, and distrainings, and quarterings of a rapacious and sensual soldiery, scarcely any one individual, unconnected with the prelatic faction, had been excepted. Nothing farther occurred till about ten o'clock at night, when all the family had been summoned around a peat-fire, on a sandstone hearth, to family prayers. There were in all ten individuals, comprehending the lad, the lass, six bairns, of whom Peggy was the oldest, with the guidman and the guidwife, worshipping and nursing the youngest bairn at the same time. The dogs, which lay scattered about at their ease and convenience, and which seemed, hitherto, to be enjoying a comfortable repose, suddenly sprang to their legs, and gave tongue vociferously.

"Hide me," ejaculated a young man, stout and square built, and of a somewhat prepossessing appearance. "O conceal me, honest Andrew Watson, for the pursuer is close at my heels!"

The Bible was immediately laid aside, and the whole family gathered round the strange intruder in the utmost consternation.

"Dear me!" said Andrew Watson, "and what has brought you about our hallen like an ill-doer, at this time o' the night, and in sic a like manner. I wish ye haena been where ye sudna hae been, Mr George Balfour, my man. Are na the bonny woods o' Gilston, o'er by there, sufficient to shelter the laird's son in the hour o' his difficulty and need?"

"I canna gang hame at ony rate—I have just seen, frae my hiding-hole in the Linns o' Kenley, a whole band o' soldiers scouring all over the country, and bearing down upon Gilston direct."

"But"—— Andrew was proceeding, when his well-known neighbour entreated of him to act and not to talk, for a party of dragoons would, in all probability, be at his door in a few seconds. What was to be done? The children screamed at the idea of dragoons; the guidwife wrung her hands, completely nonplussed; whilst Andrew, thinking for a moment, and ejaculating, "The son of the righteous father guilty or not, must not be deserted in his need; he asks shelter and secrecy, and he shall have both till morning, at least. So saying, he conducted Mr George Balfour privately to a small barn immediately adjoining, and filling an empty sack nearly half-full of straw, he thrust his neighbour into it, bringing the straw up around his person and over his head—there being a sufficiency of holes towards the fastenings at the mouth of the sack, by which respiration could be effected, and even vision partially obtained. Having done this, Andrew placed the sack, head uppermost, in a recumbent position, in the centre of several other sacks filled apparently in a similar manner with grain. "There," says Andrew, "stand ye there till morning; and gin ye hear the door open, and see armed men enter, beware of your breathing, for even that may betray you."

Mr George Balfour had been seen passing Den Head, after the affair of the archbishop, and a herd callant had pointed his route out in the direction of Kinaldy farm-house. Thus instructed, a company of from ten to twelve dragoons surrounded the dwelling-house of Kinaldy about twelve o'clock at night, and, breaking up the door without any ceremony, proceeded immediately to search for the murderer. The children—even to that in the cradle—were all turned out naked; the cows were dislodged from their stakes, and set adrift in the fields; two horses were unstabled; and the dung-hill fowls were sent screaming and cackling from their perches in the byre. By and by, the barn occupied their attention; and having made short work of the door opening, they commenced cutting and thrusting with their broadswords amongst some straw which occupied the further end. One of the band laid his hand upon a sack, and finding that it contained oats, he immediately called for assistance, and carried it out to the adjoining field, emptying it immediately of its contents, and putting their horses to feed at will. Still the object of their pursuit was invisible, and they become more and more infuriated; so, taking the eldest girl, already mentioned, they questioned her, with their pistols at her breast, respecting what she had seen or knew. Fortunately, the girl was really ignorant, as was the whole family, except Andrew, of the hiding-place of him they were in pursuit of; but, terror-stricken as she was, she admitted that she had seen Mr George Balfour, whom she knew, in the house that very evening.

"Come, come," said the leader of the troop—one of Carmichael's instruments of oppression—"we will make short work of it, Andrew; either give up him we are in search of, or we will make a bonfire of the hail bigging, and leave you and these naked savages to warm your skins at the flames. This they would actually have put into execution, had not a horseman arrived at the critical moment with information that Balfour of Burley had been traced to Dura Den, and that their immediate presence was required to surround the retreat on all sides, and capture the main instrument in the bloody transaction. A retreat was thereupon immediately sounded, but not till Andrew Watson had been assured that he, at least, should not escape, but that his property; if not his person, should pay dearly for harbouring a murderer. With great speed was the pass of Dura surrounded, and afterwards searched, even to that cave in the steep face of the rock, part of which is visible, immediately opposite to Yoolfield, even to this hour; but, if even Balfour had taken refuge here, as is, from several circumstances, more than probable, he had received warning in time, and had fled to Lanark, in the west country. So the avengers of blood were too late for their quarry, and were obliged to return to Cupar towards morning, with the report of their total failure in capturing any of the offenders.

In the meantime, Mr George Balfour, younger of Gilston, escaped from his durance, and, without saying to any one in what direction he meant to retreat, escaped by Kenley Glen, from the old barn of Kinaldy. That he went on board a ship at Elie, and immediately got off to the Continent, was afterwards fully ascertained.

In the meantime, the poor family of Andrew Watson suffered most severely. They were dragged up to the Sheriff-court at Cupar, and, being examined on oath, were compelled to admit the concealment of Mr George Balfour; they pled, as was true, their ignorance of the precise crime of which he had been guilty; for, although they might suspect the nature of the crime from what the girl had witnessed, and Mr George himself had expressed, yet, no name had been mentioned by either party, and the accused was entitled to plead the benefit of ignorance on the main point. No matter; their goods were distrained by orders of the infamous Carmichael, and they themselves turned adrift as outlaws, to seek for shelter with the beasts of the field. Such doings in those days were not uncommon, and scarcely dared any one to express disapprobation, for fear of involving themselves in the same fate.

Houseless and homeless did Andrew Watson, his wife, and six children—of whom Peggy, already mentioned, was the eldest—take their way on the 15th day of May, (old style), across the moors of Fife, towards Auchtermuchty, where an uncle of Andrew's kept a small public house, and dealt a little in horse flesh. This uncle was a great favourite of Carmichael's, and one of the most active informers against the non-conformists, and, in particular, against the murderers of the Archbishop. All this was known to Andrew; but what was to be done; he did not know where to turn himself; and, in the extremity of his condition, was, in a manner, compelled to seek for refuge where he had never hitherto placed any confidence. Wearied and worn out, the whole family arrived at Norman Watson's about sunset, and found his wife at home, but not himself. Their piteous tale was told, and temporary sustenance rather grudgingly afforded, when Norman arrived himself—his face dreadfully flushed with drink and rage, and in words and with acts anything but friendly—he insisted upon their immediately leaving his threshold. His wife, though somewhat inclined to mercy and hospitality, was manifestly the slave of her husband's temper, and she offered no resistance.

"O man!" exclaimed Andrew Watson, whilst he gathered up his weary limbs, and beckoned to his wife to nurse her child ere they departed—"O Norman, but ye are a hard-hearted man, and totally destitute of natural feelings! But the Lord will provide, in his own good way, for me and mine; whilst you, wha persecuted his chosen flock, shall be reduced, ay, to want and beggary." This last expression touched old Norman even to frenzy; and he even lifted up the handle of a horse whip, which he had in his hand, to strike down his nephew with.

"Come on, man!—come on!" said Andrew. "Strike down and murder your brother's bairn, and send *her* there husbandless, and *them* there fatherless, into the woods of Falkland; but ye canna strike down the uplifted arm of Him who now sees you, and who one day will reward the sinner according to his deeds. But we shall e'en mak ye free of us." And thus saying, he left the house, followed by a sobbing wife, and five weeping and screaming children. They wandered forth, in the dusk of a beautiful evening, into the woods of Falkland, and, sitting down under the shelter of a large oak tree, Andrew Watson proceeded to give out from memory, the 121st Psalm, which was sung by the whole family, with the exception of the child at the breast. It is impossible to conceive a more appropriate exercise in such a locality than this. The twin Lomonts rose to a considerable height above them. The moon had just taken possession of the southern sky, and looked mildly and benevolently down upon their sylvan resting-place. The sun had set in glory, and his beams yet lingered on the nor'-western sky. The air was warm, and the grass was dry, soft, and matted—the "*tenaci gramine*" of Horace. Before proceeding to conclude with prayer, and in consideration that they would not see to read a chapter from the small pocket Bible which had been spared to them, Andrew gave the following commentary on the psalm which had just been sung:—

"'I to the hills will lift mine eyes,'

Yes, there they lift their heads before us, the beautiful work of God—the twin Lomonts of His own creation!

"'From whence doth come mine aid.'

"O Lord of Hosts! do thou descend here as thou didst on Sinai and Horeb, and aid thy poor, wandering, houseless servants; for the aid and protection of man I have not; and unless thou leavest thy heavens and comest down, I and the wife of my bosom, and my poor little ones, must perish."

Hereupon the voice of lamentation was heard; but it was suddenly repressed by Andrew springing to his feet, and repeating with great emphasis:—

"'My safety cometh from the Lord,
Who Heaven and Earth hath made.
The moon by night thee shall not smite,
Nor yet the sun by day.'

"So we will e'en go to rest in the confidence of the fulfilment of His gracious promise."

And, having prayed fervently, and placed the younger ones in each other's arms, they laid themselves down and fell asleep. They must have slept long and soundly, for the sun was more than an hour risen, when a staghound was seen licking the face of Andrew Watson, as he and his family lay in the woods of Falkland: in fact, Lord Crawfurd had left, that morning, his residence at Struthers, in the parish of Ceres, and had pursued a fallow deer, with "hound and horn," into Falkland forest. The hounds had been taken off the scent by the unusual finding of a covey, as it were, of human beings beneath a tree, and sleeping in the open air; so this naturally excited observation, and his lordship himself, with several attendants, immediately rode up to the spot. The Earls of Crawfurd, from time immemorial, were distinguished not less by their high and noble descent, than by their princely bearing and kindly feeling; besides, they had all along aided the Reformation from its opening, and supported Presbytery against the inroads of Prelacy. The mournful story was told and listened to. A horseman was called upon, and dismissed on a secret errand, and the family were directed to make the best of their way to Struthers—the Fife residence of his lordship. An ample breakfast with the housekeeper awaited their arrival; and they were told after breakfast, that as his lordship's *hen-wife* had died suddenly—a few days before—and no new appointment had been made, Andrew Watson should possess the lodge, which she formerly occupied at the gate. And whilst he looked after the gate, and a few black-faced sheep which were kept, for table use, in an adjoining park, his wife should take the management of the poultry.

Thus ended the trials of Andrew Watson, who lived to see his uncle a bankrupt, turned out of house and hold, and carried to his grave, with scarcely a mourning attendant, in consequence of his own acts. Truly,

> "The ways of God are righteous altogether."

XIX.—THE TRIALS OF THE REV. SAMUEL AUSTIN.

Amongst the oldest recollections which I have, is my attendance, along with my mother, at the dispensation of the

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in the parish of Penpont, Dumfriesshire. Mr Keyden officiated at that time as parish minister, and was known through all the adjoining parishes, and, in particular, in my native parish of Closeburn, as a most able, eloquent, and popular preacher. Consequently, whenever the occasion came round, as it did regularly about the middle of June—

> "The roads war filled frae side to side
> Wi' mony a weary body,
> In droves that day."

Morton boated the Nith at the Boat-pool, and poured *in* her hundreds; Closeburn took the water at the nearest, with stilts, horses, and carts; Kier was completely deserted. Penpont emptied her wooded and sequestered glens of all that could wield a staff, or kilt a petticoat; even the more remote Keir Glencairn, and Dunsmore, sent their contributions of sacrament hunters. There they all congregated on the green slope of the manse, looking towards the sunny south. The Scaur sent her ample waters dancing and sparkling on the saugh tree, and the willows saw themselves reflected from her pools; whilst the stony banks murmured under the gentle salute of the stream. The tent stood with its back to the south, and the scorching sun; whilst a forest of faces fronted in an opposite direction. The whole scene was at once so imposing and picturesque, that it has established itself indelibly in my brain. A bald-headed little person, with spectacles, mounts the tent stair or ladder from behind; he takes off and thumbs his eye-glasses; whilst his soul is complacently abroad over the communion-tables, covered with napery—bleached white as the driven snow, on the very green where it is now spread. It was on one of these occasions that I heard Mr Keyden, in his *after* address to the communicants, express himself in nearly the following terms:—

"My friends and fellow-communicants, the ground which you now occupy is hallowed—it is holy. On this very spot did your forefathers meet, to hear the good, the pious, the persecuted Mr Samuel Austin—him whom the lawless hands of wicked men banished, with all he held dear, to the cave, and the moss, and the mountain. O Creehope! that now re-echoest to thy peaceful waters, what a tale thou couldst unfold of Austin's nightly watchings, and prayer, and praises. O Queensberry, that rearest thy proud and double front to the very breast of heaven, have not thy long heath and deep morasses hid the servants of God when the pursuer was near at hand! O water! pure and peaceful water of Scaur, that now stealest along as if unwilling to disturb our present doings and meditation, thou didst hear him groan—thou didst mark his tears, and those of his deeply afflicted wife and family, on the day when his trial had come, and was not over; but now the servant of the Lord hath gone home to the house of his father. He and his are now around the throne, reaping, and greatly enjoying the reward of all their sufferings—the noble, the everlasting recompence of reward. He whom Lag pursued, and Douglas hunted, and Johnstone cursed with words of wicked and self-condemning import, is now following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—yes, my friends, far and away, beyond that white cloud, which now comes betwixt heaven's sun and us; far and away in the unfathomed depths of eternity—unmeasured fields of immensity—there dwell—there dwell—he and his. They are clothed in white, because they are worthy; and they cease not, night nor day, giving glory to Him that sits upon the throne. Go ye, my dear brethren, and do likewise; serve your God like him, through ill as well as good report, in adversity as well as prosperity, and the like reward will be yours." My youthful feelings were naturally excited by this very, very powerful address, in consequence of which, on my way homewards, I laid my mother under contribution to the whole extent of her traditional information on the subject. This information has been, since that period, considerably increased by a perusal of a MS. diary lent me by the late worthy minister of Keir, Mr James Keyden, whose father—the minister of Penpont, already referred to—had found it, along with some other papers, in an old barrel in the manse garret. I cannot speak positively, but my impression is, (and the present minister of Penpont, Mr Smith, will correct me if I am wrong,) that this little roll of torn and soiled papers is lodged in the hands of the presbytery clerk, and may still be verified by actual inspection. From these diaries, the following narrative, true in all its leading facts, is composed.

Samuel Austin was a native of Closeburn, and born, apparently, about the year 1600. His father was a shepherd on the farm of Auchincairn; and the son was educated in a great measure by an uncle, who had seen a little service, having served as a soldier till the civil wars made him glad to retire on a small allowance, which the Government of the time had made to him. This person happened to be not only a soldier but a saint—that is, one who, in the language of the day, sought his God frequently and earnestly in prayer and supplication at a throne of mercy. He had, besides, been well-educated for the times in which he lived, and took special care that his young name-son, Samuel, should be benefited by his superior information, as well as by his genuine and ever-fervent piety. He would walk out with the boy of a summer evening; and, having caught his attention, and gained his good-will by short and striking narratives of his own adventures "by flood and field," he would take him to the top of that immense heap of stones from which the farm manifestly has its appellation, and, pointing to the magnificent prospect around, raise the young spirit from earth to heaven—from the visible to the invisible—from the external work to the internal agent. He would then talk of God's visible church on earth, of the Reformation and the reformers; of the burnings and slayings, and torturings for conscience' sake; and of the efforts which had more recently been made to maintain beloved Presbytery in Scotland in particular. All this was accompanied by Bible and historical readings. It was then that young Samuel Austin grew up under his uncle's tuition, without ever having entered a school door. When the boy was verging towards the man, he became every day more and more attached to the cause of liberty and Presbytery; and, at his uncle's expense, was educated (according to the limited and imperfect usage of the times) for the church. When only twenty years of age, his learning and piety gained him an unanimous call from the adjoining parish of Penpont, where, at the period to which my narrative more particularly refers, he had laboured successfully and most acceptably for many years. In the meantime, his good friend, his uncle, had died, as also his parents; whilst a blind girl, his only sister, had come to live with him at the manse. About twelve months after his settlement, he married. For many years after Samuel Austin became minister of Penpont, all seems to have gone on well. I find his settlement noticed in the diary referred to in the following terms:—"16th September, 16—. This day I have been solemnly inducted into the pastoral charge of many souls. Lord, what am I or my father's house, that thou shouldst honour me thus!"

Though re-instated on his throne, principally, by the Scottish Presbyterians, through the agency and address of the famous General Monk, and notwithstanding his having more than once sworn to the famous National League and Covenant, yet no sooner was Charles the Second, of infamous and treacherous memory, fairly established on the throne, than, yielding to the interested suggestions of intriguing and selfish counsellors, and to those of the arch-traitor Sharp, in particular, did this monarch set about establishing Prelacy in Scotland as well as in England, under the agency of Middleton and Lauderdale. By them, Sharp, Fairful, Wishart, Sydserff, Mitchel, Hamilton, Wallace, Fletcher, Haliburton, Forbes, Paterson, M'Kenzie, and Leighton, were ordered to be consecrated, and sent down to Scotland, with the titles of Bishop and Archbishop, to take their seats as an Estate in the Scottish Parliament, and to forbid all induction into benefices, unless by the imposition of the prelates' hands. This was immediately and extensively remonstrated against by Synods and Presbyteries, as well as by lay and clerical individuals, throughout Scotland in general, but more particularly throughout the countries south of the Forth and Clyde. It was throwing up, in spirit at least, all that their ancestors had been contending for, even unto the death by *fire*, for more than 150 years, and was, at the same time, submitting to an illegal and arbitrary adjustment of star-chambers and councils. With Presbytery was there all along entwined and commingled political freedom and equal law; and the Covenanters of the year 1662 saw full well, that if they sacrificed the one, they must likewise surrender the other. It was about this time, that, on account of Mr Austin's neglect of obtaining conformation or induction of the then Bishop of Galloway, within whose diocese Penpont lay, he received a summons ordering him to appear incontinently before Bishop Hamilton (brother to Lord Belhaven), to answer for his contumacious neglect. As Mr Austin had originally been inducted and ordained, according to the rules of the Presbyterian Church, he did not feel himself at liberty to obey the bishop's mandate.

Some time after this, the family of Mr Austin were placed in circumstances of a very trying nature. William Austin, an only son, and now a probationer of great promise and talents, had long been threatened with that fatal complaint which smiles whilst it drinks dry the well-springs of life.

And sore and seriously did the alarmed and affectionate mother plead with her husband to satisfy the bishop, submit to a renewed presentation from Douglas of Queensberry, the lay patron, and thus reclaim his manse and stipend undisturbed and undisputed. But Samuel Austin was not to be diverted from his line of conceived duty, even by the most tender ties of the heart.

It was on a keen, frosty Saturday morning, in the month of January, whilst all the surrounding hills were covered with snow, and the pools, ponds, and lochs with ice, that the family of the manse were convened in the little parlour, and engaged in family worship, which was, as had been usual for some time, conducted by the young probationer, William; for although the fatal disease had not yet impaired his faculties, or very greatly reduced his strength, its presence was still manifest by the hectic spot in the cheek and the nightly fever. William had been selected as the future choice of a neighbouring congregation, should they be permitted to make their own selection; but the state of his health had made it manifest to all that his Master had not so determined. Whilst William was upon his knees (after having sung the psalm and read the chapter), pouring forth, in extempore and fervent expression, the feelings of himself and of his fellow-worshippers to the common and true God, through the one common and only Saviour, the door was rudely assailed, and ultimately forced open, and in came the harsh and bearded countenance of the afterwards notorious General Dalziell of Binns,* accompanied by a band of well accoutred dragoons.

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* Of the times to which reference is here made, as well as of the character here introduced to the reader's notice, Blackwood, in the "Sketches of Scottish Character," thus expresses himself, vol. viii., p. 12 :—

> "Sad time indeed, oh most detested time,
> When vice was fealty, and religion crime;
> When counsellors were traitors to the state;
> A chancellor's authority was fate

"What have we here?" exclaimed the exasperated and really astonished intruder—giving, at the same time, the person engaged in prayer a rude push with his bootless foot*—"what have we got here?" addressing himself to one of the troop of the name of Johnston. "Why, here we have the whole batch—man, mistress, and maid—seeking Cromwell's corkskrew. Come, have done with your canting and grunting, young one—up and be doing, thou old hoary traitor—clear up these blinkers, bonny Betty Blossom, for I have a message, in which ye are all somewhat concerned, from his Majesty, King Charles, God bless him! and his curse be on all his enemies. What! not grunt or growl an amen! Old Sam, I say, I have a polite message here from his Majesty's Lord Chancellor, at the instance of my Lord Hamilton, Bishop of Galloway, to warn, denounce, and declare you a runnigate traitor, unless you shall, within eight days from and after this date, bestir your stumps, and wait upon his Lordship, in his palace at Whithorn; and there, and in that presence, receive and accept of ordination as an Episcopal curate from his Lordship—having first obtained a presentation to this living from the true and undisputed patron, my Lord Douglas of Queensberry."

"*That*," ejaculated, instantly and firmly, the resolute and determined servant of God—"*That* no power on earth nor under the earth—no force of arms nor menace of look—no Laird of Binns nor Bishop of Galloway—shall ever compel poor Samuel Austin, the honoured pastor of a Presbyterian people, *to do*."

And Scotland felt the grasp, o'er muir and dale,
Of cruel, beastly, turncoat Lauderdale;
When Grierson stepped abroad in human gore,
The peaceful peasant butchered at his door;
And cruel Graham, and merciless Dalziell,
In nightly rendezvous enacted hell."

A very striking engraving of this well-known person, is given by Burns of Paisley, in his admirable edition of Woodrow.

* Dalziell never wore boots.

"Then," replied General Dalziell, making use of an oath which it would be fearful, as well as impious, to repeat, "off you shall budge, this very day, hour, and instant, and betake yourselves—man, woman, and boy, rag-tag and bobtail—from this here snug, comfortable manse, to that there wide and roomy and northern county of Angus, far and away beyond the river Tay—ay, and until my Lord Chancellor's farther pleasure be known respecting you."

"O spare us!—O spare us!" exclaimed, or rather screamed, Mrs Austin, running up to the fearful, long-bearded man, and clasping him round the knees, weeping and wailing most dismally—"O spare us this once, and all shall be done as you wish it. Yes—yes, Sam, my dear Samuel Austin, you must just say the word—just say you will see about it—you will think about it—you will ask the Lord's advice about it—and maybe these terrible men will leave us (the blind, ye see, sir, and the sick, and the old and infirm) to finish our days—whar the feck o' them hae been spent—and to lay our banes in the auld kirkyard o'er by yonder."

"Get up, woman, wi' your yammering and blarney! D'ye think the King's officer does not know, and will not execute—ay, and to the letter—his duty. Get up! and mak that auld hardened traitor say the one half that ye hae done, and we shall soon rid you of our presence."

"O Samuel—Samuel!" said the poor woman, rushing from the knees of the captain to those of her husband, and ultimately, as she proceeded, taking him around the neck, and looking into his firm and unchanged countenance in the most imploring manner—"O Samuel! my own dear and kind husband! the father of my dear and dying boy! the brother of that helpless blind creature sitting greeting in the corner there! O Samuel Austin, look at me! Don't look away that gate; look in my face again, whar ye said ye have often looked with pleasure. O look at me! look at me! at your own Betty Sheils, *kindly*, and just say one word—one single short word—yes! O say yes! at least do not say no; or we are ruined, harried, driven, in frost and snow, at mid-winter, into the mountains and the forests!"

"No more of this mummery!" exclaimed Dalziell. "Either promise, my old boy, to do as your wiser half would have you, or, by all the broad acres of Binns, ye do not lodge another night under the rooftree of Penpont Manse—that's all."

Hereupon the poor blind woman, who had all along been sobbing aloud came rushing forward; and, catching hold of her brother's hand, bathed it in tears shed from beamless sockets, but remained silent. This was indeed a trying hour to this good and affectionate man; and, for a moment, his purpose seemed shaken, aud he looked around him, and towards his son, who had hitherto remained a silent but interested spectator of what was going on.

"O Willie, Willie!" at last exclaimed the poor heart-broken saint—"O Willie! my son! my only child! what wouldst *thou* have thy father do?"

"I would have him," responded the boy, (as he was called in the family)—"I would have him do his duty, and leave the rest to God."

"Thou art right—thou art right, my child! Come to my arms! I did but for an instant wish the cup to pass from me; but thou art more than thy father's child. Thou hast saved thine own soul, and mine besides; and now, ye men of war, and of rapine, and of blood, come on; I am prepared"—(looking to his son)—"we are prepared; do your worst. God, who fed Elijah in the wilderness, will not permit the old, the blind, alas! my child, I fear I may add the *dying*, to perish houseless and helpless. We will rid ye of our presence this very day, and repair, with all possible despatch, whithersoever the Lord willeth."

Hereupon the poor mother fell down in a faint, and dropped into the arms of her blind sister-in-law.

"Johnston," said General Dalziell, "see these traitors unkenneled before noonday's sunset, lock the kirk and the manse doors, and bring me the keys. March, my lads! We will be late for breakfast."

So saying, the troop, with the exception of two, galloped off for Drumlanrig, the seat of the Douglasses of Queensberry.

The following Sabbath was clear, cold, and frosty, and the ground where the people met was dry, and free from snow. The crowd was immense; many stood all day; some brought stools and benches; and an old fallen ash-tree was completely occupied by human beings. The manse-family, with some of the better classes, were accommodated under the tent; whilst the young Laird of Closeburn (for which he was afterwards severely fined) sat in the tent behind the speaker. In the papers of this good man already mentioned, I find the following reflections written manifestly on the eve of the Communion Sabbath:—"The Lord has been very good and very gracious this day. Five hundred Presbyterian believers partook this day of the bread of life. There was no hand to help—no voice to rouse but mine, and that of my poor dying child. My text—'I will not leave you comfortless,' John xiv. 18—afforded me great openings of the spirit, and His blessed spirit was indeed upon me this day in this great work; but my poor boy has laboured too hard in preaching and in prayer."

On Monday morning, the manse of Penpont was surrounded by carts and waggons, and the plenishing of the minister was conveyed to several places of safety in the parish, awaiting the return, if ever they should arrive, of better times. The weather was exceedingly stormy; and, to attempt an immediate journey through the Lauder Hills, towards the north, was altogether impossible. Yet whosoever should harbour this ousted family, under existing circumstances, would do so at their own peril, as well as that of the proscribed individuals. When the cart, borrowed from a kind neighbour, set out with the aged, the blind, and the sick, there was one universal wailing heard from the surrounding parishioners; nor did the procession separate, till they had reached the *then* very small village of Thornhill, where the poor, expatriated family had agreed to spend the first night in a small public-house, till some ulterior measure could be resolved upon. Poor William was immediately put to bed, for he was sadly exhausted by the previous preaching and travel, as well as by that mental anxiety which cuts through the body, as the sword does the scabbard. To remove him in this state seemed impossible; and yet, to remain with him was dangerous in the extreme; for Dalziell, accustomed to the massacre of Turks and Russians, cared no more for life, or for sickness, than for matters of the most ordinary interest! Accordingly, on the second day, a detachment of soldiers was sent from Drumlanrig, with orders to convey Samuel Austin, dead or alive, to his destined place of banishment, beyond the Tay, to which place many of the non-conforming ministers of the south of Scotland had already been removed. It was a sad, sad parting for a father, who thought that he would never more see his son alive, and for a son, who loved and valued his father's benediction over his last moments so highly; but there was no remedy; and Mr Austin was marched off for Leadhills about ten o'clock in the morning, accompanied by three rank and file well armed men. To paint the separation is impossible; even the hard-hearted soldiers, inured as they were to all Dalziell's cruelties, were moved; but it was but an involuntary and momentary feeling, which soon gave way to the recollection of their strict and military order. Away they marched onwards, slowly and with difficulty, by Carron Bridge and Durrisdeer. At Durrisdeer they halted for refreshment; and under some faint hope of some means or other occurring to favour his escape, Austin supplied the soldiers with a handsome sum to drink his health with, and he even affected to become jovial on the occasion, and ultimately won that most dangerous of all designations—"a good fellow." One of the soldiers became ultimately obstinate and quarrelsome, and swore that he would march no farther that night. In vain did his companions remonstrate with him—he swore he would shoot the first man that laid hold of him, and fell suddenly fast asleep in his chair. The other two, though considerably touched, were still determined to march up the Well Path, and to reach Elwand foot that night. The Well Path is a narrow ravine, which runs through the range of mountains which separate Nithsdale from Clydesdale. The hills on either hand are high, and almost perpendicular, and the pass beneath is rough and winding; in snow, in particular, very difficult to keep, and very dangerous to miss. Away, however, they marched; and, with great difficulty, contrived to get to about the middle of the pass. By this time the day, or rather evening, had darkened down, and the yird drift had become choaking and perplexing. The path was covered over, and smoothed in with snow, and beneath was a precipice of some hundreds of feet, a tumble over which would probably be fatal. Austin was well acquainted with the pass, but so were *not* the soldiers; and, having now reached the famous well from which the path derives its name, they halted, and Austin drew out from his pocket a bottle pretty well filled with brandy, which he had secretly provided against accident at the inn. The men, in succession, drew pretty copiously from this source of refreshment, till, at last, fearing that they might fall fast asleep in the snow, and thus perish, Mr Austin urged them to proceed. To this they still had reason and prudence left to assent, and immediately pushed, recklessly and speedily, through the snow; but, having pushed in a wrong direction, they instantly disappeared, the one catching hold of the other, and both tumbling down the abyss.

It was about four o'clock in the morning, when the mother and blind aunt were standing at the bedside of the dying lad. He had become very rapidly worse since his father's departure, and had occasionally been delirious; calling aloud for his father—his dear father, without whom he was unable to live. There was a small lamp or cruise burning on a chest-lid by his bedside, and his mother sat at his head with a cup of cold water, whilst the blind woman was rubbing his legs, which now, alas! had begun to swell. The tempest howled without, and an unfeeling landlord snored loudly and fitfully from a bed in the adjoining chamber. All at once, William Austin became more composed, and began to repeat various texts and psalms—discoursing from them—as his mother said, *most beautifully*, and, ever and anon, declaring that this was the last night he would ever see. All at once he paused—and, looking fearfully wild, and forcing himself up from his pillow, he exclaimed—

"My father—my father—my dear, persecuted father!"

His mother and aunt, whose faces were turned to his, imagined that he had begun suddenly to rave, and tried to press him down on his pillow, when the well-known voice of Samuel Austin was *indeed* heard declaring—

"It is I—it is I, indeed!—your earthly, and real father, whom the Lord has delivered, for this special purpose, from his enemies, that he might see and bless his beloved boy, once more, ere he depart;" but, alas—alas! laying hold of his son's hand, and finding it cold, and, at the same time, marking the fatal signal in the throat, "My boy—my boy is gone—he is gone to his God! Let us pray."

And, hereupon, he uttered the most composed and comforting prayer, thanking his Maker for the loan—the pleasing loan; and expressing his gratitude for the removal from the evil to come, which had just taken place. Meanwhile, the mother and aunt had ascertained the truth of the father's averment, and were bathing the cold brow of the lovely boy with their tears.

An explanation then took place; from which it appeared that, after the soldiers had tumbled over the precipice, Mr Austin had made his way backwards, with the view of seeing his beloved son once more before he died, and of giving him a father's blessing. The precipice, he said, besides, over which the soldiers had tumbled, was so covered in with snow, and so formed by nature, that he had little doubt but that they would escape, with some bruises, perhaps, but with life. In these circumstances, his adjourn at Thornhill would probably be short; as the men would naturally infer that he would return, rather than advance, in their absence. In the meantime, a coffin was prepared, and the body was removed to Mortontown (a village now extinct,) where a relation of his, an uncle, tenanted a small farm from *the* Douglas of Drumlanrig. This being closely adjoining to the kirkyard, the body was quietly and secretly, during the second night after the decease, deposited in the grave; and, much to the astonishment of his friends at the time, another coffin was kept empty in the room beside him. His wife and uncle having expressed their surprise at this, he disclosed to them his plan, which was, to take possession of the box, with the suitable cover over it, and other necessary precautions with regard to air, should a search for him be made within a few days; and that, if necessary, they should carry him out on spokes to the churchyard, through the file of soldiers, as if it were his son's body. As he had anticipated, so it happened—the same three men who had accompanied him before, assisted by a fourth, a sergeant, surrounded the dwelling, and passed their swords, as usual, through everything piercable in the house; swearing and roaring, and eating and drinking, all the while. The coffin, however, even *they* respected; and, having seen it conveyed out of doors, and in the act of being carried towards the grave, they uttered a horrible quartette of oaths and departed, determined to find out the old fox in the old den—namely, at Penpont. Thus, by his own forethought and sagacity, were these wicked men put upon a wrong scent; and ultimately, broken and cashiered by their commanding officer, for a criminal, and seemingly irremediable, neglect of duty.

Brownrig is now united with the adjoining farm of Mitchelslacks; but it was, at this time, tenanted by a Mr Hunter, a predecessor of the late distinguished Professor of Humanity, at St Andrew's. This honest man, Halbert Hunter, was a decided Covenanter; and had often walked from ten to fifteen miles, of a Sabbath morning, to hear Mr Austin preach. His residence was in the wildest division of the parish of Closeburn, and very far removed from neighbours. Having heard of Mr Austin's misfortunes, Honest Hab—for by that name this worthy man was familiarly known—set out westward, with the view of tracing out Mr Austin's retreat, and, at all risks, offering him a refuge in his remote and obscure dwelling. But nobody could give him information; and he was upon the point of returning home to Brownrig again, without attaining the purpose, when, in passing Morton Manse, his horse, scared at some clothes which were hanging, hard-frozen, and rattling in the twilight wind, suddenly reared, and, throwing him off, he was severely bruised, and carried into the farm of Mortontown, where Mr Austin was actually lodged. Great care was at first taken to keep Mr Austin and his family out of the way; but, as soon as old Halbert was recognized, and his errand accertained, the Lord's doing was instantly perceptible, and the evening was spent in pious conversation and devotional exercise.

Next evening saw the whole party—minister, wife, and sister—conveyed, not without some difficulty, to Brownrig.

This movement, however, secret and guarded as it was, had not been unobserved by some of those detestable informers, who, for hire, would have betrayed their own fathers into the hands of a murderer; and, whilst Mr Austin was, next day, addressing a number of young men and women, inhabitants of this pastoral land, he was suddenly surrounded by a band of dragoons, and captured without resistance. When his poor blind sister heard that her brother was in the hands of his enemies, whose voices she heard, though she could not see their persons, she rushed out in the direction of the sound, in a frantic manner—calling aloud on the men to spare her brother—her only stay in this world, when, ere any one could prevent the accident, she tumbled over a steep precipice, upon the brink of which, or nearly so, Brownrig farm-steading was, and is still, placed, and, lighting upon her head, she was killed on the spot. Mr Austin, seeing the danger in which his blind sister, unacquainted with the locality, was placed, strove hard to disengage himself from the grasp of the soldiers, who held him fast, but in vain; and, when he saw the poor helpless being putting her last step upon air, he uttered a scream, and bursting a bloodvessel, was with difficulty conveyed into the house alive.

" Keep down your sticks, lads—keep down your sticks. That's no the game we are accustomed to play at; when we begin, cheeks and chaft blades are apt to dance a Highland fling. Keep off your hands, or, by the mettle of this old Ferrara, which never yet failed me against Turk or Tartar, ye shall have fewer hands to keep off." Thus saying, Dalziell pushed up his horse, cutting right and left, in such a manner, however, as to terrify rather than seriously to injure; for he struck with the side and not with the edge of his weapon. In the meantime, Mr Austin was put to bed; his wife had recovered to a perception of her misery; and the cavalcade rode off, Dalziell having first appointed a guard of two men, to abide by the apparently dying man, till (as he expressed it) the "deil had his soul fairly in tow."

The day of the funeral of the poor maiden sister arrived, and with it came, through snow and storm, a considerable band of mountaineers, secretly armed with various weapons, but avowedly and openly prepared to convey the coffin to a considerable distance—to Dulgarno churchyard. The soldiers did everything in their power to annoy and obstruct, offering to assist in carrying, and then suddenly withdrawing their hands, and causing the coffin to fall to the ground—placing their muskets betwixt the feet of some of the company, and thus tripping up their heels, &c., &c. This was more than could be endured; so, after the funeral, a consultation was held, and it was agreed that, as Mr Austin was now considerably recovered, he and his wife should be conveyed from beneath surveillance of these horrid men. But how was this to be done? Many advices were tendered and discussed. At last, it was resolved upon that, about twelve o'clock at night, information having been previously given to the parties more immediately concerned, a company of twelve stout shepherd lads, armed with pistols and staves, should suddenly enter the door of Brownrig house, the bolt being previously drawn from within, and immediately seize upon and bind the twin demons, who had wrought, and were still working such dreadful mischief and cruelty. The minister and his lady were to be conveyed, through the snow, to the town of Moffat, about four miles distant, there to be concealed in a friend's house, to whom a messenger was immediately despatched, advertising him of their purpose.

Accordingly, at the hour appointed, and in the manner already mentioned, the men were secured whilst asleep, and bound and guarded; whilst Mr Austin, still incapable of walking, was conveyed on horseback—with his wife behind him, and two men holding him up on each side—over the long moor towards Moffat. It was about five o'clock in the morning when the party arrived at its destination, and the flying couple were placed for the time in a place of safety. Upon the return of the young men to Brownrig, they found nothing but a heap of smoking ruins. Dalziell, who had received information of the meditated flight, but who had not learned in what direction it was to be conducted, came about half an hour after their departure, upon the farm-steading of Brownrig; and, not being able, on account of the yird-drift, to trace the fugitives, he returned in wrath upon the inhabitants of the place, whom, after exchanging a few shots, and wounding one man severely in the leg, he ultimately captured; liberated the soldiers, and then, in the presence of the whole party, coolly set fire to the thatched dwellings, and kept close guard till the fire had done its commission.

Owing to the extreme cold and constant state of excitement, Mrs Austin fevered soon after her arrival at Moffat, and died in her husband's arms, exhorting him, with her last breath, to persevere in the good cause which he had undertaken; so much had "trial and trouble" altered the views and sanctified the heart of this weak but upright and pious woman.

Mr Austin continued to recover from his severe indisposition, and spent some months at Moffat in comparative peace and safety. It was here that he met with his brother-in-law, the worthy and beloved Mr Shiels, minister of Kilbride. Indeed, all the ten ministers of the Presbytery of Penpont, with the exception of Black of Closeburn, and Wishart of Keir, had refused to conform, and, along with nearly four hundred ministers in the south and west of Scotland in particular, had been compelled to fly from their homes and their flocks, and were, in many cases, conveyed in droves beyond the Tay; compelled to emigrate to foreign lands, or to take up their abode with the curlews and gleds of the lake and the mountain. It was indeed a sad day for Scotland the 23rd of December, 16—, when, by Middleton's drunken act of Privy Council, so many conscientious and pious men were laid aside for so long a time (many of them for ever), from their sphere of useful and acceptable ministration in the Presbyterian church. As the faithful historian of these dismal times very expressively observes—"When those I am now speaking of took leave of their dear flocks, it was a day not only of weeping but howling, like the weeping of Jazer, as when a besieged city is sacked." Mothers were seen carrying their infants through snow and storm, and large families of children accompanying their helpless parents with tears and lamentations to the cold and often houseless desert. Whoever gave them food or shelter was liable to be fined; to have soldiers billeted upon them; or even to suffer imprisonment.

The leading persecutors being about this time principally engaged about Wigton, Dalry, Dumfries (town), and other districts in the south and west, the upper wards of Dumfriesshire were less annoyed, and had more freedom of conventicle exercise. It was therefore deemed a favourable opportunity—now that the month of July had arrived—to hold a very general meeting, as privately as possible, on the confines of Altrieve Lake—a locality which has since acquired considerable notoriety from its having been the residence of one of the most distinguished characters of more modern times. The reader knows that I refer to James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, a more wonderful (perhaps) instance of merit in a completely untaught man than even the case of the comparatively early and well-educated and civilized Bard of Coila. This situation was accordingly centrical and retired; elevated, and yet surrounded by still higher eminences, and commanding the higher districts or *moors* of the Yarrow, the Ettrick, the Tweed, and the Annan. Mr Thomas Shiels was well-known to be a fit coadjutor to the worthy Mr Samuel Austin; and several people of what may be termed the better class—the small lairds, and the moorland or sheep farmers—had agreed to defray all expense of the communion elements, and to come armed to the table, that their blood might not be mingled with their sacrifice, without their making some resistance.

In the midst of a terrible storm of thunder, and lightning, and hail, Mr Austin preached the action sermon, and Mr Shiels fenced the tables—both serving the succeeding tables alternately. After the storm had passed, the day cleared out, the mist left Mount Benger's brow, and sweet Bowhill looked out in soft and sparkling radiance. No signal of an approaching enemy was made till all was over, and the two officiating clergymen had returned with worthy Davie Dun—mentioned in one of Hogg's poems—to enjoy a night's repose. He was then shepherd on Mount Benger, and lived in a sheilin on the banks of Ettrick. About daylight next morning the sheilin was surrounded by dragoons, and Austin and his brother-in-law, Shiels, were dragged out of bed and mounted together upon one horse, without a saddle, and their legs tied together under its belly; and, in this painful and ignominious state, driven across the mountains towards Peebles. When they arrived there, poor Austin, who had not yet completely recovered from his late indisposition, became so faint and weak that he could not sit, even when supported by a dragoon at each side on horseback, and they were compelled to lodge there for the night. Next morning, they were marched off in the same manner, but with legs untied, towards Edinburgh, where they were safely lodged in the Tolbooth. They were ultimately brought before Lauderdale and the council; and after severe questioning, dismissed into banishment, as was originally intended, into the shire of Angus. Next day, they were conveyed over to Burntisland, and left to make the best of their way across to Angus—being at the same time informed, that if found south of the Tay, they would be taken up and executed as traitors.

In Mr Austin's note-book, I find the following notice with which I shall conclude:—

"August, 1689.—It hath pleased the Lord to restore poor old useless Samuel Austin to his people; but where are they?—twenty years have made a sad event and reckoning here. The child has attained to manhood; the man has disappeared, or labours under the infirmities of age; and many have been removed, not only by death but by duty; they have removed, in the course of God's providence, to other parishes, and even to other lands; and my flock is changed, and I feel no heart in preaching to these new faces, who know not Joseph. O Lord, let me arise and go hence; I am alone, in an altered world, of which I am weary. My house is desolate; my child—my wife—my sister—all—all gone on before; and fain, O, guid Lord, wad I follow—now let thy servant depart and sleep in peace."

In the kirkyard of Penpont, at the west end of the church, there is a monument (at least there was, in my young days, some fifty years ago) with the following inscription:—

Here lies the worthy and godly
SAMUEL AUSTIN;
Forty-five years Minister of this Parish,
Nineteen of which years he was banished by ungodly men
from his dear Flock, and sorely persecuted for the
Truth, and for
PRESBYTERY'S SAKE.
God was pleased to restore him again at the period
of the
GLORIOUS REVOLUTION,
and he continued to the day of his death,
25th April, 1694,
faithfully, though in much bodily weakness, to administer
to his loved and loving
Flock.
"*The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*"

THE CURSE OF SCOTLAND.

A NIGHT or two previous to the battle of Culloden, three or four gentlemen, retainers of Prince Charles, and who were residing in the same house with him at Inverness, were amusing themselves with a game at cards. During the evening, one of the latter suddenly disappeared, and, though anxiously sought for, could nowhere be found. "Curse the card!" exclaimed one of the gentlemen impatiently, after looking for it for some time in vain—"I wish it were in the Duke of Cumberland's throat." The missing card was the nine of diamonds. The gentlemen, however, determined not to be baulked of their sport, contrived a substitute for the lost article, and played on till bed time.

Two days after this, the battle of Culloden was fought; and, as is well known, the insurgent army was totally defeated, and the hopes of the unfortunate Adventurer laid prostrate for ever.

One consequence of this event was, that Inverness was thrown open to the Royalists, and thither, accordingly, the victorious general, the Duke of Cumberland, directed his steps after the engagement.

It was a practice of the Duke's, on arriving at any town or village which had been previously visited by Charles, to inquire for the house, nay, for the very apartment and bed he had occupied, and to take possession of them for his own use, alleging, shrewdly enough, as a reason for this conduct, that they were sure to be the best in the place. In conformity with this practice, the Duke, on arriving at Inverness, inquired for the house in which Charles had stopped; and it being pointed out to him, he immediately took up his abode in it.

On the day after the engagement, it was reported to the Duke, that a great number of the wounded insurgents and others were still wandering, or in concealment in the neighbourhood of the field of battle. The ruthless general—whose naturally cruel disposition and sullen temper seem to have been fearfully excited by the resistance he had met with, and by the trouble it had cost him to subdue the rebellion in Scotland—on being informed of this circumstance, gave instant orders that a party of military should be sent out to destroy the unfortunate men wherever they could be found.

A strong body of troops were accordingly immediately dispatched on this sanguinary mission. But the officer in command of the party, after proceeding some way on his dreadful errand, suddenly recollected that he had no written authority for the horrible atrocity he was ordered to see perpetrated, the commands of the Duke having been merely verbal. Desirous of being better secured against any consequences which might arise from the shocking proceeding in which he was about to be engaged, he hastened back to Inverness, sought an audience of the Duke, and respectfully requested him to give him his orders in writing.

"No occasion whatever," said the Duke sternly, and somewhat irritated at the want of confidence which the demand implied. "Do as you are desired, sir. I'll answer for the consequences."

The officer, however, continued to press his request, and reiterated his desire to be put in possession of documentary evidence that what he was about to do was done by authority.

Impatient at his importunity, and desirous of getting quit at once of the subject and his pertinacious visiter, the Duke hurriedly looked about the apartment for paper on which to write the desired order; but he could see none. While looking for the paper, however, he accidentally turned up a corner of the carpet with his foot, and brought to view a card which had been lying beneath it. The Duke observing it, hastily stooped down and picked it up, exclaiming, as he did so—"Oh, here, this will do well enough for the death-warrant of a parcel of rebel scoundrels!" And he immediately wrote the fatal order with a pencil on the back of the card. This card was the nine of diamonds, the same which had been lost a few evenings before; and such is one version, at any rate, of the tradition that has given to this particular card the startling title of "The Curse of Scotland."

LEAVES

FROM THE

LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

EVERY reader has heard of the infamous speculation which is still known by the name of the South Sea Bubble. It produced a mania in the mercantile world, and brought ruin and misery to the hearths of thousands. Many who laid their head upon their pillow at night believing themselves to be rich, awoke beggars in the morning. Now, at the time when the South Sea scheme was at its height, there resided in Newcastle a Mr Hamilton, who had come from the neighbourhood of Peebles, when but a mere boy, as a clerk to a merchant; but he possessed much of the caution, the sobriety, and the prudence for which many of his countrymen are noted; and he not only obtained the confidence of his employers, but rose to be an eminent merchant himself. For more than thirty years he carried on business prosperously; he was believed to be wealthy, and he was so. But he had always been a speculative man, one whose temperament was too ardent, and he entered into the South Sea project with his whole heart, embarking in it his entire capital. He was a widower, and had an only son, named Alexander, who, at the age of twenty-one, he took into partnership with himself. The senior Mr Hamilton was a man who well knew the painful labour attending self-teaching, for he had himself experienced it; and, though he had always intended his son to be a merchant, he had sent him to Cambridge for his education, saying, "A British merchant is a citizen of the world, and stands in greater need of more languages than one, than a divine does. Therefore, my son shall be a scholar."

Alexander accordingly passed through his academical studies with credit to himself; and, as has been said, when he had attained the age of twenty-one, his father took him into partnership. But before he was twenty-three he married Isabella Anderson, the daughter of a gentleman who was then his father's principal clerk, but who had himself been an extensive merchant, until misfortune reduced him to the situation which he then occupied. She was somewhat younger than Alexander; and although a lovely girl, yet her virtues and the sweetness of her temper far exceeded her personal attractions. The elder Mr Hamilton, being aware of her many excellent qualities, though he knew her to be portionless, was not averse to her marriage with his son. But they had not been married twelve months, when the high-blown bubble burst, and the old merchant found himself a beggar. He took it deeply to heart, and, in the language of the mercantile world, he never raised his head again; but he sat sighing and pining away, like a broken-hearted child, and within six weeks he sank into the grave a ruined man.

Alexander, finding that the firm was indeed bankrupt, and that there was but little prospect of his again succeeding in Newcastle, where his pride revolted from becoming the servant of others, left his young wife with her father, and proceeded to London, where he doubted not but that amongst those who had received from his parent many thousands of pounds, he should soon be enabled to obtain a situation which would enable him to support himself and his Isabella in comfort.

His purse was, in truth, light when he arrived in the metropolis; and having taken lodgings in a mean coffee-house in Ratcliffe Highway, he despatched a note to a gentleman with whom they had dealt extensively, and, without entering into particulars, requested the loan of twenty pounds. He wrote, because he was conscious that he had not the assurance to solicit the favour personally; and he did solicit it knowing that, before he could obtain a situation in London, money to support him in the interim was necessary. From that gentleman he received an answer by the bearer of his own note, in which no notice was taken of his father's misfortunes or death; but the writer penned his reply as though he were aware of neither, and expressed his regret that, during the day, a circumstance occurred which deprived him of the pleasure he should have felt in serving Mr Hamilton; and that he was extremely sorry he could not then accommodate him with the trifle he requested. He added, in continuance, that he supposed, from the place from whence Mr Hamilton's letter was dated, that his embarrassment proceeded from some youthful frolic, and he considered that the best method of discharging the debts of such creditors, was to give their persons over to the power of the magistrates.

"Such, then," exclaimed Alexander, tearing the letter in pieces, "such is the friendship of this world!"

He was aware that the person to whom he had written was acquainted with the ruined fortunes of his house; and it was gall to his spirit to find that he not only wrote as if ignorant of them, but addressed him with the unfeeling familiarity of cold politeness, attributing to the folly of youth what he well knew to be the effect of misery and ruin.

He applied to another without obtaining any answer whatever; and the third to whom he applied, having read his note, sent a verbal message by the bearer, saying, "Tell Mr Hamilton that Mr ——— is not at home."

Indignant at the treatment of supposed friends, on the evening of the second day he discharged his bill at the coffee-house, (on doing which he had but a few shillings left), and resolved to call personally upon an old college associate who had been often obliged to him, and who then was indebted to him more than a hundred pounds. This university companion, after coming of age, had fitted up a house in a style of absurd extravagance in Leicester Square.

I should have told you that, previous to Alexander's proceeding to London, he had been compelled to dispose of the best part of his apparel to support his wife and himself, and, at the time we speak of, his appearance was what ought to be termed *shabby genteel.* He proceeded to the house of his friend, and striking upon the huge brass knocker, in the absence of the porter, a pert little French valet, with powdered hair, peeped cautiously from behind the door, and surveying him with a glance of aversion and contempt, in which he no doubt set him down to be a dun, he inquired—"Vat you vant, fellow?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford, your master," said Alexander, firmly.

"Mon Dieu! ha! ha! ha!" said the little Gaul, and attempted to thrust the door in his face; but Alexander, perceiving his intention, thrust forth his hand with a force that made the door fly back upon its hinges, and caused the huge brass knocker to sound an unusual and unceremonious alarm through the house, and at the same time drove the little powdered piece of foreign impertinence upon his back at the further end of the lobby.

"Moorder! moorder!" shouted the little valet, sprawling upon his back, and kicking with his feet upon the floor, till kitchen-maids, housekeeper, cook, butler, and all the personages in the Honourable Edward Stafford's establishment, came rushing around him, holding up their hands.

"*O sacra Marie!*" cried the little valet, as they raised him to his feet; "de tief! de savage! vould commit von moorder!—*Ma foi!* it be de miracle I be alive!" and, gathering himself upon his hands and knees, he muttered, eyeing him askance—"*Je voudrais qu'il s'en allat!*"

The Honourable Edward Stafford rushed also to the lobby, arrayed in a dressing-gown, having sprung from the hands of a hair-dresser, who was performing a piece of work upon his ringlets for which he did not consider the valet qualified; and, to give additional effect to the figure which he now made in the midst of his servants, he appeared with the one side of his head in curls, while a comb was left sticking in the other.

"What! in the name of the Tower of Babel!" cried, or rather squeaked, Mr Stafford—"what is the meaning of this?"

Alexander, whose natural humour returned at the risible scene before him, approached smiling; and, extending his hand, said—"What! don't you know me, Ned?"

"Back! back!" exclaimed the honourable and gentle Edward Stafford; "the effluvia of thy garments is poison to my nostrils! Faugh!—know thee—why thou art a moving tar barrel!" There was some cause for this last remark; for Alexander had slept with the common seamen during his passage to London, and his clothes yet bore witness to the pitchy fragrance of his bed-chamber. But Mr Stafford calling for an opera-glass, raised it to his eye, and, surveying him for a few moments, inquired—"Why, who are you? Your face—I have seen it somewhere! Who are you?"

"Have you forgot Cambridge and Alexander Hamilton?" said the other.

"Sandy Hamilton!" exclaimed Stafford, rising an inch, as if in surprise—'we always called you Sandy. But, come, let me hear this lark—'tis a prime one, I will vow, from your appearance; and yet you were no lad for life either," he added, as he coldly held out his forefinger, and turned to conduct him into an apartment.

Alexander, having related to him his present situation, requested from him payment of such a portion of his college debt as he might find convenient.

"A plaguy odd affair, 'pon my honour!" drawled out Stafford; "but I'm sorry I can't oblige you just at this moment. Never was a poor dog so confoundedly dunned! I am obliged to bilk the bailiffs at every corner. 'Pon my word, Sandy, I have had as many *Bills of Middlesex* served upon me, within these six months, as would fill a stage coach! Nothing could be so provoking!—My rascal of a tailor, too, got a *Quare claussum* popped into my hands only this morning! Lost a cool five hundred last night, also. So, you see I am involved on all sides. There is no way of redemption for me, that I can see, but taking a walk across Blackfriars. I do say that it is confoundedly hard that one can't oblige one's friends—but I hope you see, my dear fellow, that it is impossible. I am sorry for you, but I can't help it at present—you must see that plain enough. Only, at the same time, your outward man seems approaching to the third and fourth letters of the alphabet—and, if there be anything in my wardrobe that would be of service"——

Here he paused—and be it known, gentle reader, that the Honourable Edward Stafford was one of the most diminutive of men; and as he stood by the side of Alexander, the crown of his head did not reach his shoulder. He again proceeded—"But why, Sandy, you know, when you were at Cambridge you were the Apollo, nay, the Adonis, of all the heiresses and rich dowagers within seven leagues. Many of them are in town now, and would be glad of an opportunity"——

"Sir," said Alexander, reprovingly, "you forget that I am a husband."

"Yes, yes, so you are," drawled out Mr Stafford; "but that need not cause you to make sermons against your own preferment. I remember now, it was a low match—the daughter of one of your father's clerks! O Sandy! Sandy!—I thought you had more spirit."

"Sir," replied Alexander, "my wife is the daughter of an honest man, whom you contributed to bring low and to ruin;" and, casting upon him a look of scorn, which caused the small gentleman to make precipitate retreat behind his chair, he added, with a sneer—"Farewell, Mr Stafford, and I wish you joy of your hopeful prospects." Thus saying, and without waiting a reply, he left the house.

It was now July, and one hope remained. A gentleman who held a seat in the House of Commons, and who owed his return to the money advanced by the late Mr Hamilton, and the activity and zeal of Alexander, professed to be touched by his misfortunes, and promised to obtain for him a situation under government, which was then vacant. The day on which he was to be installed into the office was named; and Alexander, in the fulness and gladness of his heart, wrote for Isabella to come to London.

It may here be as well to inform the reader that the Honourable Edward Stafford, of whom we have spoken, was connected with the Borders. As hinted by Alexander, he had been one of those who had contributed to the ruin of Isabella's father. But there was one circumstance which Alexander knew not, and which was, that, for some years prior to her marriage, the Honourable Edward Stafford had been her heartless persecutor, and as a villain had beset her path. The tale of her husband's misfortunes having rekindled his hopes, he proceeded to the north to renew his plots and persecutions.

It was early in August, when a vessel, on board of which there were many passengers, sailed from the quayside of Newcastle. The morning was clear, the sky cloudless, and the villages, on either side of the Tyne, appeared in summer beauty. They had passed Shields, the pilot departed, and wished them a pleasant passage; several ladies and gentlemen promenaded the deck, contemplating the scene. Isabella, unconscious of being observed by all, sat alone on the starboard side of the companion, her elbow resting by the top of the binnacle lamp, and her eyes fixed upon the shore.

While she thus sat, an imposing little personage, wearing a superb Spanish cloak, flung with what may be termed graceful negligence across his shoulders, and having a highly-flavoured cigar in his teeth, consequentially ascended the cabin stairs—looked knowingly towards the mast-head—gave two or three springy struts across the after-deck—cast an aristocratical glance around the passengers—stood suddenly still—bent pryingly over the companion—stole round on tiptoe, tapped Isabella familiarly on the shoulder, and, throwing back his little body to its extreme altitude, he stretched out his parcel of white fingers, saying—"A study for a Rembrandt, by the Graces! I am a fortunate fellow in meeting you again; but didn't know, 'pon my honour, until lately, that my friend, Sandy Hamilton, had the happiness of being acquainted with you."

"Mr Stafford," said Isabella, "the wife of him whom you call your friend has hitherto been accustomed to plainer language."

"You are severe, my pretty paragon," whispered the little man; "but, now that you are leaving the north country in quest of a husband, do not disfigure that lovely face with north country formality."

And, casting aside both formality and delicacy himself, with the air of a wooer who presumes more upon his own importance than the feelings of her professed to be beloved, he seated himself by her side, and, with an affected and seemingly careless playfulness, threw his arm across her shoulder.

"Sir," said Isabella, rising indignantly, "you have this moment called my husband your friend—if you are ignorant of the sacred duties of a friend, or of the respect due to my sex, and the conduct becoming a gentleman, let the misfortunes of our house be my protection."

"Protection!—creature of beauty!" said he, "I will protect you with my life! Nay, do not frown; for your anger only makes your loveliness the more provoking, and calls back the colour which your misfortunes, as you term them, are trying to banish."

"Begone, sir," said Isabella, "practise your fooleries on those who will listen to them;" and she walked to the opposite side of the vessel, whither she was immediately followed by her unabashed tormentor.

"Come, sweet one," resumed he, "do not delight in throwing lightnings from eyes where moonbeams would blush at the presence of rivals."

"Your behaviour, sir," said Isabella, "in any man, but especially in one bearing the rank of a gentleman, is contemptible, cowardly, and unmanly. On former occasions I have borne your insults without drawing upon you the chastisements which you merited; but you now profess to know me as the wife of your friend, and as such I claim your respect—or I shall know how to resent your conduct."

"An angel in a fury!" exclaimed the Hon. Edward Stafford, with a theatrical start. "Respect you!—why, I adore you!—worship you!—will die for you!"

"Pitiable fool!" replied she, turning from him with disdain.

"Only the fool your eyes have made him, lovely cruelty!" rejoined he, following her, and extending his hand to lay hold of her arm.

"'Vast there, you chap!" cried the skipper—a round, red-faced, jolly-looking seaman, who had observed from the helm the conduct of Mr Stafford; "'vast there, I say—I'll have no monkey tricks on board o' my ship. That young lady is under my especial care; for, d'ye see, her father was once one o' my owners, and so was her husband and his father before him—and I just tell ye, ceevilly, my canny lad, ye had better shove your boat off!"

"Fellow!" sneered Mr Stafford, surveying him with a look of contempt, "do you know to whom you speak?"

"I neither know nor care, young gentleman," replied the skipper; "but I'll let you know that neither you nor any man shall ca' me fellow, or use any indecent liberties on board my ship, so ye had better take in a reef, or keep a look-out for squalls."

"Heathen—uncivilized Laplander!" fumed Mr Stafford, stamping his little foot upon the deck; do you know, sir, to whom you are opening your barbarian lips?"

"My wig! I'll tell ye what it is, young chap," vociferated the skipper, "I dinna care though ye were first cousin to the flying Dutchman; ye shall know I'm maister o' this vessel."

"Confound you and your vessel!" retorted the little man, stamping more passionately than before; "dare you open your frog's mouth to a gentleman?".

"Ye poor singet creature!—ye miserable button top!" rejoined the skipper, "has an insignificant object like you the assurance to confound anybody? Are you no feared that I wry your neck about like a cock-sparrow's? As sure as death, sir, if ye drop another word o' your insolence to me I'll capsize ye under a bucket."

"You savage!—you Greenland bear!" reiterated Mr Stafford, brandishing his clenched fist in the face of the other; "are gentlemen to endure the boorish insolence of a Hottentot like you? You'll capsize me under a bucket, will you? Look you, sir, if you don't ask my pardon instantly, before the whole ship's company, sir, I'll put a brace of bullets through your ass's head! I will, sir! Do you think with your cowardly carcass to intimidate me? Were you as big as Goliath, I'll let you know I'm a gentleman, sir!"

"Here Jack, take the helm," roared the skipper to one of his crew; "and now, ye chattering morsel o' humanity, I'll let ye see whether you or I be the best gentleman in this ship, at any bat!"

He sprang forward, Edward Stafford sprang back, and the passengers sprang between them.

"Hands off, gentlemen, if you please!" said the skipper; "remember I am master o' this vessel. I wud wish to be civil to everybody, but it is not in the power o' nature to put up wi' the impudence o' a creature like that; and though I'll no hurt him—smash me! he shall either haud his tongue, or he shall never speak more. Did ye hear such names as I put up wi'?"

"Unhand the ruffian, gentlemen!" cried Mr Stafford, who had retreated amid-ships, and felt his courage revive under the protection of half-a-dozen ladies. "Unhand the mountain of moving mud! I'll teach such fellows how to interfere with a gentleman! Unhand him, and I'll send him below with a piece of cold lead through his fin!" And heroically taking from his pocket a handsome silver-mounted ivory case, he placed it with a determined air upon the top of a beef cask, again exclaiming—"Don't hold him, gentlemen—these will do for him!"

"I tell ye again, sirs," shouted the skipper, "don't hold me! Do you think a thing like that shall threaten to shoot me on board o' my own ship?" And he struggled to approach him.

"See to yourselves, gentlemen!" cried Mr Stafford, laying his hand fiercely upon the pistol-case.

"O sir!—pray sir!—dear sir!"—screamed the ladies, grasping him in their arms.

"Oh, don't be alarmed," said the little Honourable; "'pon honour, I shall only wing him—I have had some experience in these matters."

The skipper made a desperate rush forward—the ladies screamed louder—Mr Stafford seized the pistol-case furiously, crying—"Then die, fellow!"——

His exclamation was cut short—a lady grasped the terrible pistol-case; it opened in the struggle, and the hateful weapons fell upon the deck, though not in the shape of pistols, but the honourable gentleman's sea-stock of cigars! The gentlemen laughed—the ladies tittered.

"It has ended in *smoke*, sir," said a fair punster.

"You can still *fire* them!" added another.

And the skipper, laughing like the mirth of a hoarse wave, taking him firmly by the ear with his finger and thumb, said—"Gather them up, sir—gather up your *fire-arms!*" And, as Mr Stafford persisted in disobeying, another twitch was given to his ear, and another and another, while he screamed and wept through passion and pain, danced and twisted to be free, to the amusement of the spectators, who enjoyed his punishment and humiliation.

"Sir," said Isabella, "addressing his tormentor, the frantic cries of Mr Stafford having brought her from the cabin, where she retired at the beginning of their altercation; "if a fly sting us, we may drive it away, without taking pleasure in its tortures; and it is but a cowardly revenge to torment an insect."

"Well, ma'am," said the skipper, withdrawing his hand from the ear of the other; "I have no wish to hurt the thing; only, after his impudence to you, as well as to mysel', he had better have a care what sort o' colours he hoists for the rest o' the passage—that's all." The agony and confusion of Mr Stafford cannot be described. He blushed, swore, threatened, and wept by turns—rushed to the cabin, hurried back, threw his card in the captain's face—stamped, stormed, and vowed vengeance, till he became silent from exhaustion. A few weeks before, he had left London for the north, parlty to avoid the importunities of his creditors, whose claims had been discharged after his departure by the too fond indulgence of a foolish mother, but chiefly to carry into effect his long-cherished designs against the beautiful wife of his college companion, whose misfortunes caused him now to look upon her as an easy and lawful prize; and it was under this conviction that he watched her departure for London, and took his passage in the same vessel. Mortified at the ridiculous figure he exhibited, he resolved to suspend all further attempts until they arrived at London.

But three days were not past, notwithstanding the misfortune of the pistol-case, until the Honourable Edward Stafford, through the assistance of self-confidence or impudence, with pretended wit and foppish extravagance, was again the principal personage in the vessel. His brandy, his claret, and his cigars, operated marvellously in his favour with the gentlemen; every one sought his society, and called him a good fellow. The weather had hitherto been too fine for sea-sickness, and his agreeable attentions, his vivacity and elegant compliments, rendered him not less a favourite with the ladies. Isabella alone despised him; while he, affecting to despise her in return, circulated foul whispers against her character. Whatever doubts there might be in the minds of his auditory respecting the veracity of his accusation, the breath of slander is exhaled from a poison so black, that for a time its passing shadow will veil the holiness of a saint, and bedim the radiance of a seraph. Isabella, therefore, was shunned by her own sex as contagious, and by the other treated with cold indifference. Occasionally she observed their scrutinizing glances, or coloured at their half audible whispers, but, in the purity of her own heart, she suspected not the cause. In the master of the vessel only she still found a friend, who, although rough as his own element, evinced towards her the tenderness of a parent.

For some days the wind was adverse, and on the Sabbath morning, being the fifth from their leaving Newcastle, it was a dead calm. The skipper was walking backward and forward upon the deck, now glancing at the clouds, and now at the shore, with the countenance of a man who considers he has reason neither to be satisfied with himself nor with others. In the cabin some appeared to read, others yawned, while some went to the deck and instantly returned. The ladies looked at each other, whispered, fretted, and exclaimed—"How tedious!" Isabella sat silent amidst the unhappy group, "among them, but not of them."

Mr Stafford, who hitherto had been whistling at his toilette, turned round and exclaimed—"Dumb as the foundations of a Quaker's chapel! Come," continued he, placing a couple of bottles of claret upon the table, "my pantomimic company of tragedians, allow me to administer the comforts of a calm to the necessities of your poor dumb mouths;" and, as he poured out the wine, he sang a few lines of an idle song. The company looked upon each other with a flitting expression of horror—none of them had been accustomed to hear the Sabbath so desecrated, though, as he proceeded, a few of them relaxed into a smile. But Isabella, rising, said emphatically—"Sir, the FOOL hath said in his heart, There is no God!" And she pronounced the word, *fool*, with a pointed sarcasm, which, although it in some measure took from the spirit of the original, rendered it more poignant in its present application.

"Your ladyship!" replied he, sneeringly, and, bowing to her with an air of mock humility. "Lily of the saints!" he added, "preach on, that the humblest of thy slaves may treasure up in his heart of hearts the pious honey of thine own sweet lips!"

He paused, and continuing his attitude of mock humility, commenced to hum the tune which he before had attempted to sing.

"Sir," said Isabella, glancing upon him with scorn and compassion, "I pity you."

"Now for a sermon!" he added, but the words faltered on his tongue, and he sat down in confusion.

"Sermon or no sermon," said the skipper, entering from the foot of the cabin stairs, where he had descended to stop the singing himself, "I'll neither allow Sabbath-breaking, nor any wickedness that I can prevent, on board a ship o mine."

"Come, old prig," returned Stafford, "I've paid for my passage, I suppose, and I'll have you to know that I'll amuse myself as I please. Don't think, my good fellow, that because I have listened to a little sermonizing from a pretty face, that I am to be bored with your croaking." And he began to whistle a waltz.

"Poor thing!" resumed the skipper, "ye are to be pitied, after a'. I'll declare, when I see bits o' dandy creatures like you glorying in your wickedness, and doubling your nieves in the face o' Heaven, it puts me in mind o' a peacock spreading its tail to stop a whirlwind, or a cockle opening its shell to swallow a waterspout!"

At this moment the breeze sprang up, and the mate summoning all hands to deck, Mr Stafford was left unheeded to reflect on his own folly. During the night the wind blew very fresh; and the vessel having left the land and entered Boston Deeps, laboured considerably. From the ladies' cabin issued prayers, shrieks, and groans of suffering, and every one devoutly wished to be once more blest with the tediousness of a calm; and, as the vessel yawed, rocked, and staggered with the heavy swell, and the ponderous boom, with its mainsail flapping like thunder, grating, crashing, clanking, and tearing with sudden jerk, or with fearful lunge reversing the laws of gravity, and tearing both mast and vessel into the sea, scream rose upon scream; sickness and terror met in conflict. Babel seemed above them and thunder below. The wind bellowed more madly. The plunges of the vessel became more frequent and more alarming. There was a running to and fro upon the deck—a bawling and a bustle. Darkness hung over them—thick, substantial darkness, rendering the very surge invisible. The heavy clouds seemed embracing the waters, and the crushed winds roared between the pressure of their meeting. A storm, by almost imperceptible degrees, had circled round them. Every sail of the vessel was reefed, and both anchors dropped; but the chain cable snapped like the web of a gossamer, and she lunged and tugged from her remaining anchor, dragging it after her, like a fiery horse tearing from the rein of a schoolboy. The mast bent as a proud man bends in the day of adversity; the topmast went overboard, striking heavily upon the deck as it fell. It struck immediately over the bed of the Honourable Edward Stafford. A loud shriek issued from the curtained railings; they were flung open, and out sprang Mr Stafford, dragging after him the bed-clothes, wringing his hands, and crying to Heaven for mercy. The dressed and the half-dressed now stood around the floor, clinging to each other and the furniture of the cabin for safety—each speaking and no one hearing;—but a clamour, loud, confused, and fearful, mingled with the noise of the winds and waves. Isabella alone remained tranquil. The vessel had dragged her anchor for several miles; they were in the midst of breakers, and the increased confusion upon deck announced the horrors of a lee shore, when she suddenly brought to, and half turning to the weather, a heavy sea broke over her, sweeping from the deck the boat, casks, and spars, and gushing down the cabin stairs, encompassed its terror-stricken inmates to the knees. The heart of Mr Stafford sprang to his throat, and his feet to the table, where he remained upon his knees, wringing his hands by the side of a flickering lamp. While he was in this position, the vessel was suddenly driven upon her side; for, through the darkness of the night, another vessel had run against her, and, she being cracked with age, the bowsprit of the other went through planks and timbers, and, before it gave way, projected rudely several feet into the cabin, forming an unexpected and unwelcome intruder upon the motley scene of sickness and despair. Fear had already fastened the gurgling gasp in the throats of many of the passengers, when a voice from the deck exclaimed—"Ladies and gentlemen, look to yourselves!" It was the signal of death. A general groan followed. There was a rush to the cabin stairs. Calm as Isabella had hitherto been, she was now changed. It is difficult to look the grim angel in the face with indifference; but she rushed not to the stairs with the others. Mr Stafford was driven from the table by the uncourteous visit of the bowsprit, and now wallowed upon the floor, buffeting with the brine, imagining himself at the bottom of the vasty deep. The concussion of the vessels had brought his head in violent conjunction with the cabin floor, which, with his excited fears, deprived him of the consciousness of time and place; and being immersed in water, he continued to gasp, groan, shriek, and flounder upon the floor, seizing the heels of his fellow-passengers—who, in their eagerness for escape, had wedged up the cabin door—doubting nothing, as they trode upon his delicate fingers, that he had thrust them into the mouth of a ravenous fish, which had come to feast upon his unfortunate body.

"Save me!—save me!" he cried again and again, as he continued tossing and rolling in the water.

The vessel again righted, and he was swept to the feet of Isabella, who, aroused by his cries of terror, raised him to his feet. He struggled, gasped, trembled. His eyes and mouth opened to their utmost width—he appeared to draw the breath of an hour in a moment; and, gazing round vacantly, he seemed to marvel whether he was in the world of men, of fish, or of spirits.

"You are living, brave sir!" said Isabella, sarcastically, smiling at his excess of terror; "but," added she, leaving him, "the Sabbath-breaker and the scoffer are not the most courageous in the hour of danger."

It is only necessary to add, that the vessels having got disentangled, with daybreak the storm abated; and, on the ninth day, after leaving Newcastle, the vessel drew up off the Hermitage Stairs, Wapping, with the loss of topmast, anchor, and cables, beef and water casks, spars, oars, and other minor *et ceteras*, together with damaged bulwarks and hulk; but with the crew and passengers safe.

Isabella had not had an opportunity of writing to her husband, to acquaint him with the name of the vessel in which she would take her passage, nor when she would leave Newcastle; and, as they drew up in the pier, while the friends and relatives of other passengers thronged around them, to her no hand was extended. She stood as one deserted upon the threshold of the Nineveh of nations; and the crowds that passed before her seemed as the ghosts of solitude, giving tongues to bereavement, and forms to desolation. She felt herself alone in the midst of millions, solitary as a wearied bird whose wing has drooped in the wilderness.

She went on shore, where she was immediately accosted by a hackney-coachman, whom she requested to convey her to a Mr Fulton's in Cornhill, to whose care her husband had requested her to forward the letters she addressed to him. She was informed by the skipper that Cornhill was not above a mile and a half from the wharf; and, as the coach drove on, passing the bustling crowds who hurried along the streets, she forgot for a moment her own feelings in contemplation of the motley scene. The coach stopped facing the Mint, and the driver, leaving his box, spoke a few words with another coachman, who immediately drove rapidly in the direction of Watling Street. After a few minutes' delay the coachman again mounted the box. She had never before looked upon a countenance where a grovelling and villanous soul had written in such broad and unblushing characters its own worthlessness. It was one of those countenances which it is hardly possible to pass upon the street without disliking. In it were pourtrayed meanness, servility, depravity, and deceit—it was purple with dissipation, and blotched with iniquity. She shuddered to find herself, though in the broad day, and in the midst of the metropolis, under the care of such a man. She began to feel conscious that they must have proceeded much farther than the distance mentioned by the skipper, and, with a degree of alarm, she inquired at the driver if he rightly understood where she wished to be set down.

"Vy, yes," replied he, "I knows the house well enough; it is Mr Fulton's of Cornhill, an't it?"

"Yes," she answered; and he added that they would be there within five minutes, and drove on. Within the time he specified they stopped before an elegant house in a square, the silence of which was only broken by the rattling of a few fashionable carriages. The coachman alighted, and a liveried servant stood ready to receive her. She inquired if the house to which she had been conducted was Mr Fulton's of Cornhill, and the servant answered that it was. She, however, had been within it but a few minutes, when she became conscious that she was under the roof and in the power of the Honourable Edward Stafford. Despair gave her strength; she raised her eyes to Heaven, and in the emphatic words of Judith, prayed—"Strengthen my hand!" Grasping a fruit-knife, which lay near her, in her hand, she made a desperate effort to escape; and, although the servants aided their master in opposing her, yet, as my readers have already had a specimen of his courage, and as the heroism of his domestics was not of that description, which "smiles at the drawn dagger and defies its point," they will not be surprised to learn that through half-a-dozen such assailants one weak woman, rendered desperate, forced her escape.

Having reached Cornhill, she was from thence conducted, by one of Mr Fulton's clerks, to Red Lion Square, where her husband then lodged. Their meeting was one of sorrow and of joy; but I need not describe it. Alexander perceived that she was agitated, and he entreated to know the cause. She, fearful of the consequences that might arise from divulging it, would have concealed it; but it is difficult for an affectionate wife to conceal from her husband aught that concerns him; and within half an hour he knew all that had passed during her passage to London and since she arrived. He would have rushed forth on the instant to seek revenge, but she clung around his neck, she entreated him not to leave her, and he consented to defer the punishment of Stafford to a more favourable moment.

From week to week, Alexander's expected appointment under government was delayed; and, although they had parted with almost every article of any value which they had brought with them, they began to be in want. Yet Isabella murmured not, but sought to sooth her husband and raise his drooping spirits. At length, the long wished-for day on which he was to be installed into office arrived, and ten o'clock was the hour fixed by his patron for meeting him. Everything around him wore a face of joy. He now knew that wealth was unnecessary to secure happiness with one who had taught him that contentment is true riches. He longed for the appointed hour. There was a tear in Isabella's eye, but it was a tear of gratitude and happiness.

"Bless thee—my own!" she said, as he rose to depart; and in silence he kissed her cheek.

Never until now had she felt the full measure of her anxiety for the issue of an event to which her husband looked forward with passionate eagerness. Slowly and tediously the morning passed away; noon came, and the hours seemed lengthening; and evening drew on, but it brought not Alexander. The long summer day died in midnight, but no remembered footstep stopped at the threshold. The morning dawn stole upon the voiceless streets, imperceptibly filling them with the slow and silent light.

"It is another day!" she exclaimed, in agony; "and where is my Alexander?"

Precisely at the appointed hour, Alexander had arrived at the house of his patron. The servant who opened the door, muttered that it was too early—that his master was not down—and requested him to remain a few minutes in an apartment adjoining the lobby. The few minutes became an hour. Alexander was mortified and in agony. The clock, measuring out the moments, seemed to remind him of the insults to which he was subjected. At length he heard the "great man's" foot upon the stair, and rose to meet him. But the patron passed on, and his carriage drew up to the door. Alexander sprang forward, and, in the excitement of his feelings, placed his hand upon his shoulder. The bestower of patronage turned haughtily, and demanded the cause of the interruption. Alexander returned his glance with equal haughtiness, and demanded to know how he had dared first to mock and now insult him.

"Begone, fellow!" exclaimed the senator, contemptuously.

"Never!" replied Alexander, "until you have apologized for that word, and for having dared to mock me."

The courage of the silent member was rather of an aspen character, and he became pale and trembled. Struggling for dignity of manner, shaking, and calling up an air of offended importance, he said he should have felt pleasure to have served him, in consideration of the kindness of his family; but added, after considerable faltering and hesitation, that he was compelled to withdraw his countenance and patronage, owing to the representations which he had heard of his habits and character, and that, in consequence, the situation he intended for him was already bestowed upon another.

"Representations regarding MY habits and character, sir?" exclaimed Alexander; "tell me who has dared to revile me."

"My informant is a gentleman of honour and of family, one who knows you well—and beyond this I will not be braved to inform you."

"You shall!" exclaimed Alexander.

"Never!" answered the other bitterly, and called to his servants to obtain assistance and give him into custody; and as he spoke he slid to the farther corner of the lobby. Alexander's eyes glared upon him as a wounded lion measures its victim. There was an unearthly earnestness and determination in his manner that might have appalled a stouter heart. He grasped the trembler firmly by the arm, and in a tone more impressive than anger, slowly and solemnly inquired—"What is the name of my defamer?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford," stammered out the other, awed by the desperate resoluteness of his manner.

"Stafford!" exclaimed Alexander, starting back—"am I then a second time stung by a worm?—poisoned by a reptile?—Stafford!" he repeated, and hurried from the house.

He had turned aside into the Park, to conceal his agitation, indulging in the secret determination to proceed to Leicester Square and seek vengeance upon his enemy; but his gestures betrayed the agitation of his spirit, and excited the loud laughter of two horsemen who rode behind him. He turned fiercely round upon the mockers of his misery—one of them was the Honourable Edward Stafford. Alexander sprang upon him, and dragged him to the ground, as a tiger springeth upon his prey. In his fury he trampled him beneath his feet, and he lay bleeding and insensible upon the ground, when his companion, having procured the assistance of the police, Alexander was taken into custody, and, being brought before the magistrates, was committed for trial.

Wretched and disconsolate, Isabella beheld the sun of another day set, and yet she heard nothing of her husband. She had hurried from street to street, wild and restless as a household bird, which, escaped from its cage, breaks its wings and its heart, as it flutters, without aim and without rest, through the strange wilderness of liberty. Wearied with fatigue, and well nigh delirious with wretchedness, she was ready to inquire of every stranger that she met—"Have you seen my Alexander?" And again and again she returned to their silent and comfortless lodgings; but there the sound of her own sighs murmured desolation; and, in impatient agony, she exclaimed—"My husband!—my Alexander!—where shall I find him?"

She had sent messengers in every direction, and to all of whom she had heard him mention but their name; and, in her agony, her tearful eyes had wandered over the broad Thames, fearfully and eagerly surveying its shores, and following its stream for miles, till, faint and weary, she sank despairing and exhausted on the ground. A letter from her husband was at length put into her hands, which informed her that he was then a prisoner in Newgate. She immediately hastened to the gloomy prison-house, and when she arrived before it, and beheld its ponderous gates, studded with bolts of iron, and overhung with the emblems of the felon's chain and the gibbet, she recoiled back for a few paces, and her heart failed.

Until the time of admission arrived, she wandered disconsolately in front of the prison, and, on being admitted, she heard the sound as of an unruly multitude issuing from the corner of the prison whither she was conducted. She was shewn into a large and noxious apartment, where about a hundred individuals, of all ages, the accused and the condemned, were assembled together—some cooking, some practising the art of the pickpocket, and others holding mock courts of law. Her heart became motionless with horror as she gazed wildly around the den of guilt and pollution. On perceiving her, they desisted from their amusements and boisterous mirth, and gazed upon her in silent wonder. Their sudden and unusual silence aroused Alexander, who was sitting alone in a dark corner of the room; and, sorrowfully raising his head, he perceived every eye turned upon his own beautiful and afflicted wife. He sprang forward, and, forgetful of all around, she sank upon his bosom. He led her to a remote corner of the apartment, and pressing her hand to his breast—“Ah, my Isabella!” he whispered in agony, “this is indeed kind! to visit me in such a place, and in the midst of these miserable beings!”

“Say not kind, dear husband,” she replied—“what is too much for the affection of a wife to do? Horrible as this place is, but yesterday to have known that you lived, and I could have been its inmate for life.”

“Isabella,” added he, “for imprisonment I care but little—from a tribunal of my countrymen I have nothing to fear; but there is one constant and heart-piercing misery which is consuming me. While I am here a prisoner, who will protect, who will provide for you, my love, for you?”

A faint smile trembled over her features as she replied—“He who sheltereth the lamb from the storm! He who provideth the ravens with food!”

“But,” added he, “are not we already almost without money?—And, until I am free, until”——

“Come, love,” said she tenderly, “do not afflict yourself with idle fears. The sparrow chirps not the less joyfully in the farm-yard because the last sheaf is given to the flail; but day after day finds the little flutterer happy and contented as when it nestled in profusion. You bade me come smiling, and you only are sad. Come, love—give me one smile—fear not for me; with my needle I may be enabled to provide for myself, and to assist you."

"Isabella!" he exclaimed, starting with agitation, and smiting his hand upon his brow.

"Nay, love," she added, "start not at shadows; when real deprivations are to be averted, yield not to those of pride and imagination. Adversity is a stern master, but it relaxes its brow before a cheerful pupil. Come," she added, "let us rather speak of what I can do for my prisoner."

She endeavoured to pronounce the last word playfully; but the attempt failed, and she turned aside her head to conceal a tear.

"Nay, sweetest," said he, affectionately drawing her hand from her face, "do not weep—I will not be unhappy—for the sake of my Isabella I will not."

But the day of trial came; Alexander was placed before his judges, and his faithful wife stood near his side. The clerk of the court rose, and, holding the indictment, said, "Alexander Hamilton, you are charged with committing an unprovoked and outrageous assault, with intent to murder, upon the person of the Honourable Edward Stafford, in Hyde Park. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," said the prisoner, firmly.

The counsel for the prosecution then rose—"Gentlemen of the jury," said he, "I confess I am at a loss to find words to express the deadliness of purpose, and the desperate character of the assault with which the prisoner is charged. A deed more reckless, more atrocious and criminal in its character, never was attempted. Its aim was blood!—murder at noonday, in the Park, and in the midst of hundreds. After this, where is safety to be found? Were the prisoner to go unpunished, madmen might be set at large, and assassins crowd our streets with impunity. The ferocity of a savage of the woods, when fired by victory and inflamed with the war-whoop, is tame, compared with the brutal violence which was manifested by the prisoner. With a disregard of all personal consequences, his object was *murder!* I repeat the word—murder was his object; and he has failed in accomplishing it only through the prompt assistance of the medical gentleman to whose care my client was intrusted. I do not say this from a desire to influence you against the prisoner; but from a regard for truth, for our common safety, and the public welfare. I shall prove to you that this is not a solitary case of the prisoner's outrage; but that, on the same day on which he attempted the life of the prosecutor, he was guilty of a scarcely less daring assault upon an honourable member of the House of Commons—that on former occasions he has forced his way into the house of Mr Stafford, and endeavoured to extort money by violence. In short, the evidence is such as will leave no doubt upon your mind of the prisoner's guilt and desperate character, and assures me of what will be your verdict. What plea he will set up, I know not; but he who could attempt the life of a fellow-man in broad day, will not be nice as to the expedients to which he resorts. Should temporary insanity be urged, I need not tell you that you will not consider whether it be lawful for a person subject to such fits of lunacy to be left to go at large amongst mankind; and that, if such a plea be offered, you will duly examine that it be established."

During this harangue, not a muscle of Alexander's face moved; but he stood with his eyes bent upon the speaker, manifesting throughout the same calm and proud look of conscious innocence. Isabella exhibited almost the same calmness as her husband; but at times the glow of indignation and impatience flushed her cheek, and she threw upon the accuser a glance of scorn.

I will not enter into the evidence. Several of the witnesses were gentlemen of rank, who, having been spectators of the assault in the Park, gave an unprejudiced statement of what they had seen, and their testimony tended to prepare the minds of the court to give credence to the evidence of less respectable witnesses; for they confirmed the desperate character of the attack and the injury received by the prosecutor. A herd of others were suborned to aggravate the charges, and to controvert whatever evidence the prisoner might bring forward. The case for the prosecution closed, and every hope of acquittal was destroyed. Still he maintained the same firmness; and, for a few seconds, not a sound was heard throughout the court. To the ear of Isabella, the breathless silence was as sudden thunder; hitherto, while listening to the accumulated perjuries with which her husband's ruin was sought, notwithstanding her hopelessness and agony, her eye had not wandered from him; but she now turned, with a wild and imploring look, towards the jury, at once to read on their countenances the impression which the evidence had made, and to conjure them in speechless agony to believe it not. But she, shuddering, turned away from the appalling scene, and a groan burst from her bosom. She beheld in their features the cold, fixed expression of men who knew no feeling but justice; and she saw their eyes turned to her husband, but in sternness rather than in compassion.

"Prisoner," said the judge, "you have heard the charges which have been preferred against you; if you have any witnesses on your behalf let them be brought forward; or, if you have aught to say in your defence why judgment ought not to be pronounced against you, speak now."

"My lord," said Alexander, "I crave your indulgence. Trusting to innocence, I have employed no counsel, and I hoped to need none. If, therefore, in the few words which I shall speak, I depart from the rules and usages of this court, I beg your protection and direction. Gentlemen of the jury," he added "much of the evidence which has this day been given before you has not impressed upon you a firmer conviction of my wickedness than it has filled me with horror at the baseness and the perjury of which men can be found capable."

"My lord," interrupted the prosecutor's counsel, "such language is not to be borne."

"The prisoner has claimed my protection," said the judge, "and he shall have it. Proceed," added he, addressing Alexander, "but remember that unsubstantiated charges against others will only aggravate the proofs already given, and militate against you."

Alexander bowed, and continued—"Gentlemen, that you believe me the guilty being that I have been described, I cannot for a moment doubt; nor do I hope that I shall be able to shake that conviction, and prove to you between myself and the prosecutor, who is, indeed, the guilty party. I know well that words spoken by one situated as I now am come in a questionable form and produce but a slight impression, yet, as truth is stronger than falsehood, I would hope that what I do say may not be altogether ineffectual. That I did make an attack upon the prosecutor in the Park, is *true;* that my manner was as enraged as has been described, I admit; and that my language might be of a threatening character, I do not deny; but that my intentions were criminal, that I sought his life, is false."

He then stated the nature of his acquaintance with Stafford—his having forced his way into his house to request payment of a part of the debt which he owed him. But when he spoke of the indignities which he had offered to his wife, and of the calumnies he had whispered in the ear of him who was to procure him an appointment under government, his soul flashed truth from his eyes, every glance told a tale of scorn and wrongs. Stafford, who was present, quailed as the tide of his eloquent indignation rolled on; and could the astonished listeners have turned their eyes from the speaker to him of whom he spoke, they would have read guilt and confusion on his pale cheeks. Even the judge laid down his notes, and gazed upon the prisoner with a look of wonder. Isabella's fears passed away as she listened to the torrent of indignant eloquence which he poured forth; and, while she participated in the admiration of the crowd, she felt also the affection and the pride of a wife, and, starting from a seat with which she had for some time been accommodated, she pressed closer to his side, her bosom heaving, her cheeks glowing, and her beaming eyes declaring that, where he then stood as a criminal, she was proud to call him husband.

"Could any man," he exclaimed, in conclusion, "bear more than I did and not resent it? Would any of you, gentlemen—yea, would his lordship, under the same provocations, have acted otherwise than I did? If the attack was furious, was it not provoked? Or could human nature endure more and attempt less? If I am culpable, it is because I have the feelings of a man—because I am not more or because I am not less than man: and, if I am guilty, is my prosecutor innocent?"

The counsel for the prosecution again rose, and added—"Gentlemen of the jury, I presume it is now unnecessary for me to remind you that the prisoner having attempted murder on one of his Majesty's subjects, it is altogether unnecessary for him to perform it now upon his Majesty's English. If rhetorical froth were proof, and sound received as evidence, the case of the prisoner might be different from what it is. But it unfortunately happens for his oratory, that froth is not proof, and that noise is not evidence. I will not insult your good sense by adverting for a moment to his shallow calumnies and malicious assertions. You will place them to the spirit of hardened wickedness that invented them. But, gentlemen, we shall now see what evidence he has to bring forward in support of his oratory.

and in substantiation of his malicious and frail subterfuges."

No witnesses being likely to appear in behalf of the prisoner, the governor of the gaol voluntarily came forward and bore testimony to the excellence of Alexander's conduct while under confinement, and also to the exemplary affection and modesty manifested by his wife.

He left the witness-box, and another pause ensued, when Isabella sprang forward, stretching out her arms towards the jury, and exclaimed—"Hear me! hear me!—only for a moment—as you are men—as you are fathers—as you are Christians, hear me! Do not tear my Alexander from me—he is innocent? Yes! yes! he is innocent of the guilt attributed towards him by the wicked man who seeks his life!—innocent as your babes that may smile at their mother's breast! Save, then, my husband, and heaven will reward you! He is all that is dear to me—will you tear us asunder? If ye have hearts within you, you will not. Look on his countenance—is there guilt there? Look upon his prosecutor, upon his enemy who sits before you, and oh! can you find innocence where dissipation has left its furrows, and hatred its shadows? If ye *will* do what may seem to you justice—remember to love mercy! Draw not upon your heads the misery or the blood of a human being through the guilt of a false witness! Save, I implore you, save my husband, for he is innocent!"

The judge summed up the evidence, and more than once he paused and wiped away a tear that did not disgrace his office. "Go," he concluded, addressing the jury—"the prisoner is in your hands; and if there be a doubt upon your minds as to whether you should pronounce him guilty, give the prisoner the benefit of that doubt."

"Merciful heaven!" exclaimed Isabella, "deliver my husband—make known his innocence to these men!" She stretched her hand towards him, and cried aloud, "O my

Alexander—in death—even in death, I will be yours! They shall not part us!"

And, as she wept, he bent over the dock and threw his arms upon her neck, exclaiming—"Loved one, weep not. The Avenger of the oppressed will not forsake us."

The jury were rising to withdraw, every eye was moistened with Isabella's distress—while all felt conscious of her husband's doom—when a humming noise arose amidst the spectators, and, "Let the jury stop!—let the jury stop!" cried many voices from the door.

The skipper of the vessel in which Isabella had come to London pressed into the court; and, being sworn—

"Weel, sir," said he, "it isn't much that the like o' me has got to say; only, ye see, Mr Hamilton here, that ye ca' a prisoner, is an auld owner's son o' mine. I have known him since he was the height o' my knee, and he was always a guid and a cannie laddie; and I venture to say, had his father not been ower honest a man, and paid twenty shillings in the pound to every body, he wouldna hae been in his grave to-day. As for *the thing* that is carrying on the prosecution against Mr Hamilton, I knaw something o' him tae; and he may think himself weel off that it wasna a wife o' mine that he shewed his blackguardism to, for had I been my auld maister's son, hang me! after the insults I saw him offer to this bonny lady here, when they were both passengers on board o' my ship, Jemmy Johnson take me! if I wudna hae twisted his neck off his shoulders in a moment!"

The counsel for the prosecution had risen to ridicule the evidence of the prisoner, when he was interrupted by a negro servant of the Honourable Edward Stafford, who had been touched by the fiery eloquence of Alexander and the distress of his wife, and who rose and exclaimed, while others attempted to keep him down—"Me will speak!—Massa be de grand villain! Me be black, but you won't make me one black heart. De prisoner be innocent! Massa do owe him von hundred pound, for me carried it to massa, and massa did try to steal de wife ob Massa Hamilton; which be bad—berry bad! Prisoner be de injured man, like de poor African!"

This involuntary testimony on the part of the negro arrested the attention of both judge and jury, and they were requesting that he should be placed in the witness-box, when two gentlemen hurriedly entered the court, and pressed forward, requesting to be heard. The one stated himself to be a Mr Fulton, a broker in Cornhill. With him Alexander's father had long had extensive dealings. He has already been mentioned in the course of this narrative. Alexander had requested that his wife should address her letters to him to his counting-house. But he was abroad when Alexander reached London, and he only arrived on the evening before his trial. He knew the services which his friend, the elder Hamilton, and his son also, had conferred upon the member of parliament of whom we have spoken, and calling upon him, and hearing the accusations that were preferred against Alexander by Stafford, he demanded that they should be probed to the bottom. They did investigate into them, and they discovered them to be wholly false and without foundation. And the patron now came forward to express his contrition for the act of injustice into which he had been betrayed, and to bear his testimony against the character and malignity of the prosecutor. A change came over the countenances of the jury. The judge seemed perplexed, and was rising to sum up the evidence, when they rose as one man, and exclaimed—"*Not guilty.*"

"Not guilty, my lord," repeated the foreman of the jury; "but it would give us pleasure to see the accuser stand where the accused has this day stood."

The spectators burst into a shout, and the Honourable

Edward Stafford endeavoured to escape from the court. All that is necessary to add is, that Alexander Hamilton became the clerk of Mr Fulton, in a few years his partner, and eventually his successor, and his latter days were more prosperous than any that his father had known, while the worth of his wife and her affection increased with age. One word respecting the Honourable Edward Stafford, and I have done. In a few years he became a titled beggar, and twenty years afterwards, when Alexander Hamilton, with his wife and family came to reside in Northumberland, where they had been born and brought up, they heard of a poor gentleman at an inn in the next village, who seemed to be in great distress. They went to visit him—it was the Honourable Edward Stafford. He wept as he recognised them. In the words of holy writ—they heaped coals of fire upon his head—and with his hand in Alexander's he breathed his last, and at their own expense they buried him with his fathers. Such are a few Leaves from the Life of Alexander Hamilton.

THE SPORTSMAN OF OUTFIELDHAUGH.

The old property of Eyrymount—belonging to a sept of the Græmes that had at a former period emigrated to that locality, not far from the Borders of Scotland, and possessed, at the time we speak of, by Hugo Græme, a man somewhat advanced in years—was (for it has latterly been broken down into small portions) one of the finest small possessions of a commoner that could be seen in the fairest part of Scotland. Compact, and divided into two portions—one of the richest arable soil, and another, where the mansion-house stood, of planted ground, adorned by green trees and flowering shrubs—it was just that kind of property which, filling the purse and pleasing the eye, a man of sense and a lover of nature would choose to occupy and draw the rents of. The proprietor of this fine retreat — Hugo, of the fourth generation of these Græmes—was the very worst kind of man that could have been placed upon such an estate; for he held that kind of middle station between the exclusive great and the not exclusive, which, producing discontentment with what is in one's power, and generating an ambition seldom realized, neutralizes all the advantages of independence, and changes the gifts of Providence into gilded evils. The property was too small to enable him to cope with those whom he wished to associate with, while it was too extensive to admit of its proprietor being classed with many of the neighbouring lairds. Yet his pride struggled with the physical impossibilities with which the limited nature of Eyrymount surrounded him; and his life for many years had been occupied by a series of efforts to make up, by art and diplomacy, what could not be wrung from his patrimonial inheritance. His wife, Madam Græme—as she was styled by the neighbours, from her possession of a pride equal to, if not transcending that of her husband—was the daughter of a rich banker, who, after her marriage, lost his wealth, and, of course, the charm which procured for him the enviable title of father-in-law to Hugo Græme of Eyrymount, the fourth lineal heir of the southern sept of the Græmes. The pride which had been generated in the bosom of the young lady by expectation, was not relinquished with her hope of succeeding to a fortune that had taken to itself "the wings of the morning." Bringing in this way no riches to her husband, she did not leave behind her the evils which generally attend them and often survive them ; and the hundred thousand pounds she expected to succeed to, though now in the pockets of other people, and feeding a pride of a more legitimate kind in the bosoms of the possessors, founded that kind of claim to honour which a ragged heir of a thousand acres which have been out of his family for fifty years, thinks he has a right to assume, from the mere circumstance of his grandfather having been the laird. The pride of the master and mistress of Eyrymount, strong in the original stems, was strengthened, but not, like the forest crab-apple, improved, by the mutual ingrafture of connubial sympathy ; and they strained and pulled together, in their efforts to stretch the income of Eyrymount into the means of supporting a state to which it was inadequate.

An only child—a female, of considerable pretensions to beauty, simple and humble, and highly interesting in her manners, and called, after her mother, Dione, a title of which Madam Græme was very proud—added considerably to the pride of the haughty couple. They expected " to turn her to account," and had already fixed their eyes on an old rich nabob, called Benjamin Rice, who had taken up his residence at Pansey Lodge, in the neighbourhood, as a very suitable and easy kind of person, who would likely have no objection to enter without much struggle into the matrimonial noose. They never thought of consulting Dione on the subject; for, though they did not dispute that she had "some interest" in the affair, they took for granted that, as one of the family, she was solicitous for the enhancement of its fortunes, and would at once sell herself for the good of the Græmes of Eyrymount. The nabob was not averse, at least in the first instance, to partake of the fine dinners, served up as a costly kind of bait at Eyrymount House. The dyspepsia, which, along with his rupees, he had caught in India, made him nice in the selection of his food and wine; and no cost was spared by the fortune-hunting Amphytrions, to procure for him whatever might please his palate. Neither had the nabob any disinclination to feast his eyes on the fair face of Dione, who received his looks and attentions very much in the way that children do that emetic Indian shrub, called ipecacuanha. The tyranny of her proud mother, however, prevented her from shewing symptoms of displeasure, when she felt herself subjected to his scrutiny; and, as yet, no hint had been given that he was selected as the man who was to make her "happy for life."

Next to the getting off of the fair Dione in a carriage and four, and repairing his fortunes with the fortune of her husband, Hugo Græme had long sighed for getting back the merk-land of Outfieldhaugh, formerly a part of Eyrymount, and very foolishly, as he thought, given off from the estate, by his grandfather, Murdoch Græme, to a favourite friend, at a small yearly feu of only a pound sterling. This property was now a very pretty place; having been, by the first feuar, embellished by plantations and fanciful shrubs, which, in the course of time, had grown up and covered the high parts with an umbrageous clothing of variegated hues, glittering in the setting sun with a splendour which could too well be seen from the windows of Eyrymount.

The envied place had been taken from the main estate in the most awkward and provoking manner possible; for, in place of being, what its name implied, an outfield, it lay in the very bosom of Eyrymount, and was composed of the best land of the property, besides enjoying the finest prospect on any part of the estate. Beyond all, it was for ever in the eye of the gazer from the casements of the old house; and the original feeling of regret was embittered by a daily accession of displeasure, as strangers at Eyrymount pointed out to the laird the beautiful spot, and asked whether it formed part of the old domain.

The fault committed by Murdoch Græme, had been attempted to be cured by Hector Græme, the father of Hugo, who did everything in his power to prevail upon the proprietor of Outfieldhaugh to dispose of it again to him, whereby the integration of the old estate would be effected, while another property could easily be procured to the satisfaction of the seller, who had no family feelings or prejudices to gratify, by clinging to his possession. These efforts, however, had proved vain; for the proprietor of Outfieldhaugh was just as fond of his merk-land as Græme was of his larger possessions; and did not hesitate to get angry, as he was well entitled to do, when solicited to part with his property, to gratify a family pride he despised, because, perhaps, he had no family of his own of which he could be otherwise than ashamed. The wish which had actuated Hector Græme through life was transmitted to his son on his deathbed; particular directions having been given in his will that his heir should be upon the watch, night and day, to pounce upon Outfieldhaugh, and reincorporate it with the main estate, and a hint added, that there was no occasion for being over-scrupulous as to the mode by which that great object should be accomplished. This hint was only the advice which Hector himself had followed.

"Honesty has nothing to do with the getting back of what should never have been given away," said the dying man to Hugo, who sat by his bedside after the clergyman had departed. "I have examined all the rights, charters, infeftments, retours, and what not, and held them up to the light, to see if I could detect what the lawyers call 'erasures;' but, though I never could see daylight through them, your quicker eyes may be more successful. There's a clause in them, binding the heirs of Outfieldhaugh to lend the charters to us as the superiors. I forced a loan of the title-deeds upon that clause, and had a good fire in my library, which I looked at often, and then at the charter again, and then at the fire again; but—but—but"——And with these words on his tongue, old Hector Græme, who was called the honest laird of Eyrymount, expired.

The recommendation of old Hector was not lost upon Hugo, who recollected, particularly, the hint about the library fire; but a slight legal education he had received in his youth taught him that, as the charters had been registered at Edinburgh, the library fire could not aid him in getting back Outfieldhaugh. After he became satisfied of this, but not before, he "disdained," as he said, "to reacquire the property in the manner recommended by old Hector, who knew nothing about the act 1617; besides, how could he get the titles, without an obligation to redeliver them 'within a reasonable time and under a suitable penalty?'" He resolved upon another plan; but whether it was less dishonest than the speedy mode recommended by old Hector, and affected to be despised by him, may be safely left to the judgment of the world. This much may be said for Hector's project—that he had the merit of philosophizing; for, though the qualities of phlogiston had already been pretty well ascertained, the effects of its application to the rights of another person's property had not often been examined, except by the anti-philosophical fifteen who sit in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and who foolishly allowed themselves to be led by musty acts of parliament and old precedents. The mode adopted by Hugo, again, was purely empirical, and, besides, suggested to him by a change having taken place in the proprietorship of Outfieldhaugh.

Some time previous to our historical era, the proprietor of the envied property died, without children, and without any settlement. His heir-at-law was a poor hind, called Nashon Heatherton—a name given to him by his father, who believed that a scripture appellation, taken *ad aperturam bibliorum*, or chance opening of the Bible, would be attended with luck—a belief well justified by the result. Nashon had got little or no education, and, though a remarkably good-looking, stalworth countryman, was accounted shy, if not simple—an idea, however, derived merely from his appearance, which denoted no great mental vigour, though the truth was, that he had more wit than his neighbours, being only "shy of using it," and having a perverse pleasure in leading people astray, while he enjoyed the unprofitable errors that were continually made, in imputing to him a facility of being imposed upon. The intelligence that the hind, Nashon Heatherton, had succeeded to Outfieldhaugh, produced, apparently, greatly more effect upon the public, who were not to benefit by it to the extent of a farthing, than upon the "fortunate youth" himself; who, when the attorney told him of his luck, replied, with a smile, that "he had nae faith in lawyers, an' wad be cautious in takin possession o' an estate, till he was satisfied he was the true heir." Nashon had no intention of being very difficult to be satisfied on the point of right; but some who did not understand the vein of his humour, said he was an idiot who could not distinguish good from evil.

When Nashon Heatherton took possession of Outfieldhaugh—a step he adopted without the necessity of the application of force, contrary to the ideas entertained by his neighbours—he was waited upon by his superior, Hugo Græme, who went for the express purpose of taking the dimensions and properties of the new proprietor, with a view to his ulterior schemes, which he had been remodelling from the instant he heard of the devolution of the envied right on an obscure, illiterate, and simple hind.

"I am come, sir," said Hugo, as he entered the hall of Outfieldhaugh, and accosted Nashon, who was sitting in the finely furnished apartment, occupied in "glowrin frae him"—"I am come to wish you joy of a possession which has come to you without expectation; and, therefore, must yield you pleasure, greater and of a different kind, than acquisitions of property generally do, even to heirs."

"I haena felt it yet," replied Nashon, looking up to Græme with a curious, arch expression of face. "The auld hoosekeeper, Esther Maclean, has been cryin a' day aboot the beauties o' the place; but she says there's nae conies on't, sae there can be little amusement either for me or Birsey, wha sits growlin there because he's no at his auld quarters at Conybarns."

"We have more foxes than conies in these quarters," replied Græme, struck with the cause of complaint stated *in limine* by the new proprietor.

"I suppose sae," replied Nashon, eyeing Græme expressively; "there's nae want o' them in ony quarter; but they're easily got quit o'; for, whar there's nae *fules*, there's nae foxes. We had nane o' them at Conybarns."

"You seem to have a grateful recollection of that place," said Græme. "Old Langbane, the laird of it, would, I understand, sell it. You should purchase it."

"I hae aneugh o' property," replied Nashon; "when I hae Outfieldhaugh—maybe owre muckle."

"You do not understand me," said Græme. "I mean that you should sell Outfieldhaugh, and buy Conybarns with the price."

"That wadna be ill to do," said Nashon; "for they say the laird of Eyrymount has a keen ee to the place; but dinna ye think I should just be doin wi't? There's owre muckle wood on't, but that can be easily mended wi' a guid axe; an' I can get a breed o' conies frae Conybarns."

"Useful improvements," said Græme, staring at Nashon, and unable to ascertain whether he was an idiot or a wag.

"I hae ither changes i' my head," replied Nashon, "if I could be at the trouble o' bringin them oot. I like a stir aboot a place. There's some fine waterfa's i' the dell yonder; but what's a waterfa withoot a mill? Folk rin after thae things, an' seem to like the noise o' the dashin waters; but hoo muckle mair noise wad there be if there was a guid birlin spinnin mill alangside o' them? Besides, there's some life aboot a mill—the swearin o' the men spinners, the screighin o' the hizzies, their love-makins i' the green haughs, their penny waddins i' the ale-houses. It's thae things that mak a country place lichtsome. I wonder that Eyrymount hasna mair sense than to keep his place sae quiet. I'll shew him an example."

"That may not suit his taste," replied Græme, at a loss what to say; for he had some suspicions that Nashon knew him; and the introduction of himself was now made a difficult matter.

"It is impossible, sir," said Nashon: "would it no suit his taste to mak siller? They say he spends weel; and, while his waters are rinnin to the sea, withoot ca'in a single mill, he may rin dry—unless, indeed, Benjamin Rice marries his bonny dochter, Dione."

"I am thinking Esther Maclean has been giving you the news of the place," said Græme, trying to smile, but unable to get beyond a grin.

"Ou ay, the cratur has been trying to amuse me," said Nashon; "for she couldna bear, she said, to see me sittin i' the middle o' this big ha', lookin frae me, an' thinkin o' the huntin o' the conies o' Conybarns; but when the mills are set agaun, we'll hae something to keep us out o' langer. I may, peradventure, think too o' some tanneries. It's a pity to lose sae muckle oak bark; and Jamie Skinner, the leather merchant o' Peebles, says he could sell as mony skins as I could gie him."

"But you forget, Mr. Heatherton," said Græme, beginning to lose temper, "that you have only a servitude to a limited extent over the Well Burn, and will not be entitled to destroy the purity of the water."

"But water doesna rin up the brae, sir," replied Nashon. "I'm below Eyrymount, an' my neebours below me winna object. But, after a', I think o' mony things I never execute."

"I hope you will think twice about these things," said Græme. "I merely called in, as a neighbour, to wish you joy. Good morning!"

"Guid mornin, sir!" replied Nashon, without rising from his chair. "That's Eyrymount himsel," he continued, after Græme had departed, "if Esther's account o' him be correct. Isna that the laird o' Eyrymount, Esther?" said he to Esther Maclean, as she entered.

"The very man," replied Esther. "Was he wantin to buy Outfieldhaugh frae ye?"

"Ou, ay," replied Nashon; "but I tauld him I intended to build spinnin mills an' tannaries on the Well Burn."

"An' do ye intend to spoil yer estate in that way?" said Esther.

"It's no very likely," replied Nashon. "The value o' Outfieldhaugh lies in its woods an' waterfa's; an', though I pretended to like the whin muirs o' Conybarns better, it was only to bring the laird oot, an' see if ye were richt in what ye tauld me. I think ye're nearly as wise as mysel."

While Nashon and Esther Maclean were thus comparing notes, Hugo Græme returned to Eyrymount, and had a conference with his lady on the character of the new proprietor of Outfieldhaugh.

"What kind of a boor have you found this new proprietor of your old estate?" said the lady, as he entered. "Is he simple enough to sell, or wild enough to dissipate it by incurring debt?"

"He is either the most arch rogue or the greatest fool I ever met in my life," replied Græme. "I intended to introduce myself after the first salutation; but the idiot began talking about Eyrymount as if he thought I were some one else, and said such things as entirely prevented me from making the declaration. His housekeeper is old Esther Maclean, whom he has retained; and she, who bears us no good feeling, has told him everything he requires to know to put him on his guard against us—that is, I mean, if he has wit enough to take advantage of it, for I doubt yet if he is not a born idiot. He talked about hunting conies, and building spinning-mills on the Well Burn, like a madman; yet, if he knew whom he was talking to, there was a sense in his madness which I do not much like"

"Did you ask him if he would sell Outfieldhaugh?" inquired the lady.

"I did," answered Græme; "and his answer was a question—'Dinna ye think I should just be doing wi't?' What could you make of a person who could return such an answer to a plain question?"

"But you say he talked of hunting," said the lady. "That is a very good way, as you well know, of getting into debt."

"Yes, but it depends on the game," replied Græme—"cony-hunting, with an old hairy terrier he calls Birsey, will not ruin him, even if he found any conies on Outfieldhaugh, which I defy him to do."

"But the spirit of Nimrod," replied the lady, "extends to every kind of game, whether real statutory game, conies, or pigeons. Give him a smack of reynard, and the despicable cony will soon be left to its burrow."

"If he has wit enough to distinguish between a fox and a rabbit," said Græme—"which, however, I doubt. Every effort must, no doubt, be tried. Outfieldhaugh must be got by force or stealth. It must be Dione's dowry, when she is wedded to Benjamin Rice; and when he dies, as he must soon do, if one can have any faith in his gamboge-coloured skin, we shall have our patrimonial estate entire; and his large fortune to dash away with in successful competition with Sir James Featherstone of Cockairney, Sir George Beckett of Turf Hall, and all our sporting neighbours, who at present outstrip us in the race of pleasure, and excel us in the court of fashion. The question is—How is this to be accomplished? 'He that dares well fares well,' as the saying is; and I think we cannot do better than try to innoculate this piece of untenanted spiritless flesh with a little of the blood of Nimrod and Pollux. Hunting and horse-racing comprehend within themselves all sorts of expensive dissipation. If he joins our Soho Club, he will require money. I will lend it, if I should borrow it for that purpose; and I know the nature of an adjudication."

"The project sounds well," said the lady; "but I must see the cony-hunter myself, for women are better judges of men, than men are of their neighbours. I will give him a dinner, if you will give him a present of a hunter. We must blow the soap-bell before it flies and bursts."

"If you are to make a *belle* of him, you must indeed prepare plenty of soap," said Græme, smiling at the cleverness of a vile pun. "But, without a joke, he is a good-looking boor, were he washed. A cake of soap, with your invitation card, might be of some importance. It is the *alpha* of the education of a gentleman, and we must begin at the beginning."

This conversation was overheard by the gentle Dione, who was, in no small degree, interested in the affair propounded by her parents. She now knew, for certain, their intentions in regard to the disposal of her hand; and, while her judgment disapproved of their scheme, which was unfair towards the simple-minded (so she termed him) Heatherton, and cruel to herself, her feelings rebelled against a union with the gamboge-coloured old Indian, who had already ogled her into a sympathetic jaundice. The process of her thoughts was extremely favourable to calling forth a strong interest in favour of Nashon, whom she had never seen, but whom she figured to herself as a plain, good-looking man (as indeed he was), whose simplicity was about to be taken advantage of, for her sake, by his property being unjustly wrested from him and given to her, as a dowry, on the occasion of her marriage with a man she hated. Simple as she herself was, she felt inclined to counteract these ambitious and unjustifiable intentions; and, if Nashon Heatherton had been known to her, and in any way worthy of her affections, she would (so she theorised) have thrown herself into the arms of the new laird of Outfieldhaugh, saved him from ruin, and herself from an interminable grief.

The intensity of her feelings, called up by what she had overheard, and inflamed by the workings of her own mind, drove her into the surrounding woods of Eyrymount, where she might weep unobserved; and the excited state of her feelings sought relief by the natural means of speaking out her thoughts. She was overheard by Nashon. They spoke. An explanation took place, and that sympathy which follows often on mutual knowledge, led the way to love. He learned from her her own unhappy position, and the intentions of her father to ruin him, for the purpose of securing Outfieldhaugh. Proceeding homewards, he thus monologized :—

"An' sae Eyrymount wants to ride me to the devil that he may get Outfieldhaugh! He maun be ignorant o' the siller I got as the auld laird's executor, besides the estate as his heir. Let him remain in his ignorance, an' we'll see wha will ride langest an' wha'll keep strongest. My neck has as mony liths in't as Eyrymount's craig; an' if he canna get Oldfieldhaugh except by stretchin mine, I'll no' get his dochter Dione without gien his a thraw. Can onybody blame me? Am I no fechtin him wi' his ain weapons? and, besides, are we no strugglin for the same object—the junction o' the twa estates that hae been owre lang separated?"

Continuing his train of thought farther than we think it necessary to record it, Nashon arrived at Outfieldhaugh House, at the door of which he met Esther Maclean, who presented to him a face so full of expression, that the ideas seemed to be struggling in all parts of it to get down to her mouth for vent. It was clear that something pertaining to the Eyrymount family had occurred during the few hours' absence of her master; for few other subjects could have produced such a mute loquacity as her moving wrinkles exhibited when Nashon entered.

"Your threat to big spinnin mills on the Well Burn has biggit your respectability, guid sir," she exclaimed. "Read that, and then tak a turn into the stable."

Esther handed to Nashon, as she spoke, a letter from Madame Græme, finely perfumed, the sight and smell of which produced a convulsion in the old simple frame of mind of the quandam hind, which he did not care about exhibiting even to Esther. The application of his large coarse fingers to the *single drop* of scented green wax with which the note was sealed, produced a mysterious kind of feeling of awe without a visible cause, which was entirely new to him; and the great array of Cupids and roses stamped on the margin of the fine hot-pressed paper, completed the effect of this mute Ariel from the regions of high life. The note was as follows :—

"Mr. and Mrs. Græme, of Eyrymount, present their respects to Mr. Nashon Heatherton, and request the honour of his company to dinner at Eyrymount, on Wednesday se'enight, the 15th instant, at five o'clock."

On the other side of the note were a few lines, in another and a bolder hand, to this effect :—

"Mr. Græme, who has had already the honour of conversing with Mr. Heatherton, presumes upon his character of feudal superior of Outfieldhaugh, to mark the introduction of a new vassal by some trifling consideration; and therefore, and as the Soho Club meet for the purpose of paying their respects to Mr. Reynard to-morrow at the Shaking Bridge over the Hazel Burn, he requests Mr. Heatherton's acceptance of his favourite hunter, Springall, and the pleasure of his company at the chase.

"My auld maister wad hae tauld me what was in the letter," said Esther, turning up her eyes expressively into the face of Nashon.

"An' yer new ane winna refuse ye the pleasure," answered Nashon. "The braw folk o' Eyrymount have invited me to dinner on Wednesday se'enight, and sent me a hunter for the chase, the morn, at the Shakin Bridge."

"An' will ye gang?" said Esther.

"Surely," replied Nashon— "ordinary politeness seems to demand it; but what will I do for a huntin dress?"

"Yer ancestor's scarlet coat winna disgrace his heir," replied Esther. "It's up i' the leather kist, i' the blue parlour yonder; an' I'll mak oot to get a len' o' a pair o' boots frae Squire Hawthorn's butler, wha'll never let on the thing to his maister."

Nashon smiled at the idea of borrowing a pair of boots;

but pride had not yet in him attained that height which enables its votaries to look down with contempt on the obligation of a loan, and he chose to sport Squire Hawthorn's boots and Squire Græme's horse in the meantime, to gratify an object which would require still greater sacrifices. Next day, accordingly, he appeared at the rendezvous, where he in a short time was accosted by Eyrymount, who was accompanied by the proprietor of the under part of the neophyte's habiliments.

"You will find this sport better than cony-hunting, Mr Heatherton," said Eyrymount, laughing.

"Ou ay," replied Nashon; "but I fear it's mair expensive. I may become owre fond o't, an' the rents of Outfieldhaugh may scarcely haud agen the expense."

"You cannot complain yet." said Eyrymount, looking significantly at Springall.

"I should think not," said Squire Hawthorn, looking as significantly at the boots.

"No," replied Nashon, drawing up his leg a little, but immediately throwing it down again, with a jerk of the stirrup—"but I ken my weakness. I had nae less than nine terriers, ance, at Conybarns—a perfect pack; an' I wadna wonder to see me hae as mony fox-hounds—ay, an' maybe as mony hunters. I fear, Eyrymount, I maun lay a' that cost at your door."

"There's no sound on earth like the tally-ho!" cried Eyrymount, delighted with Nashon's views, which seemed to coincide so well with his own. "You will be a true son of Nimrod, an' may carry away the gree of the hunting-cup of the southern sept of the Græmes."

"I like baith the drinkin-horn an' the tootin-horn," said Nashon; "an' will empty the ane an' fill the other as weel's ony fox-hunter i' the kingdom."

"Bravo! I have not been mistaken in you," cried Græme.

"The grey lark flees hignest o' a' the singin' tribe," replied Nashon; "an' the bright gooldie the lowest. Ye canna ken a man frae his coat, ony mair than ye can tell whether a cat is a guid hunter frae the colour o' her skin."

"You are right," said Squire Hawthorn; "neither can you know a man from his boots."

"If they're borrowed, ye can say that he's a cautious, savin chiel wha wears them," replied Nashon; "but, if they're bought an' no paid," with a significant look at Hawthorn, who was known to be deep in debt,) "ye can say he's an ass. Is the horn no sounded yet? I'm keen to set aff. My bluid's getting warm wi' the thought o' the throw aff an' the hark on. Ho! he! ho! tantivy! tantivy!"

And Nashon cracked his whip as he thus emulated, by a loud bellow, the spirit of the huntsman.

The chase began, and was continued with great spirit. Reynard displayed his usual tact; and the hounds, Squire Hawthorn's pack, were in fine blood. Nashon's tally-ho was heard ringing loudest in the woods; his horse was the finest of the company; and he scoured on like the wind, heedless of the laugh that was attempted to be raised against him by Hawthorn, who had told several of his friends, that Springall, which once belonged to him, knew the touch of the heel of his old boots, and, if they did not take care, would carry the clown in at the death, and shame the whole Soho Club. This sportive sally was successful in more ways than one; for while its humour was well-calculated to produce cachination, there was a ratiocination in it which was calculated to produce a lugubrious reaction; for, to the surprise and discomfiture of all the huntsmen, Nashon Heatherton was the individual who was in at the death—a feat, doubtless, as much owing to the speed of Springall as to the dauntlessness of the rider, who, however, displayed great power of horsemanship and surprising presence of mind, on grounds of great difficulty and danger.

In the evening the club enjoyed the hospitality of the proprietor of Nashon's underfittings; and, although the borrower had, during the day, suffered the gibes of the young fox-hunter, he did not think that either these or the relation in which that part of his dress stood to the lender, disqualified him from eating his meat or drinking his wine. That he would be dubbed the butt of the company, he knew before he went; but he felt himself under the obligations of a peculiar humour, that ruled him with a power paramount to other considerations; and, in the present instance, that humour was itself subservient to objects of ambition of high import—motives that led him to overlook the temporary buzz of an innocuous raillery on the part of men who were fast going to a destruction which he was taking active means to avoid. He, therefore, put on the appearance of enjoying the fox-hunters' peculiar mode of draining the cup of pleasure to the dregs, laughed, sang, drank, and even essayed, on one or two occasions, a sturdy oath. His strength, robust health, and unsubdued constitution, enabled him to cope with the strongest of these Tricongii in their own element, wine; and when the *great cup* was brought in—which was generally when all parties were in that intermediate state between sense and forgetfulness which demanded in charity a total finisher, to send them to entire oblivion and rest—he was as sober as a judge. A quarter of an hour after the emptying of that fearful goblet, the fox-hunters around him, who had been high in their humour of drawing "rises" out of him, according to the slang of aquatic sportsmen, or "baiting the badger," in their more appropriate dialect, fell at his feet, singing as they descended, "with a hey ho chevy!" and all groaning in rough chorus. He alone sat immoveable, laughing at the sleeping pack who had been, during the night, following him with their deep mouths, and boying forth their humour. Where were they now? Their game had become their whipper-in, though they were unconscious of his whip. He took Græme's hand as he slept, and shook it as that of his father-in-law to be, and wished him joy of Outfieldhaugh. He then mounted Springall, and sought his home and his bed.

On the day appointed, Nashon, dressed and scented in great style, dined at Eyrymount. There were present several fox-hunters, Benjamin Rice, and others of the neighbours—none of whom came up to Nashon in brilliancy or scent. They seemed all delighted and amused with the grotesque figure, excepting Dione, who stared at him in sorrow and disappointment; for she could not conceive how so sudden a transformation from simplicity to gaudy glitter and bad taste, could have taken place on one who appeared to be gifted with prudence and good sense. She feared the hunter had turned his brain, and that her father and mother were in a fair way of seeing their scheme accomplished. Her pride was, moreover, hurt, when she saw the man whom she had begun to love, made a laughing-stock to a whole company, including the hated Benjamin Rice, who was himself exquisitely fitted for filling the high office so unaccountably occupied by the plain and cautious Nashon Heatherton. Nor was she better pleased with his conversation. which, while his old Scotch was retained by necessity, was directed towards subjects which she thought he despised—the interminable hunt, the turf, the dog-kennel, and the wassail chamber.

"I am told, Mr. Heatherton," said Benjamin Rice, "that you were in at the death at the last hunt, and that you stood the great cup better than any one of the company."

"Ou ay," replied Nashon—"I hae turned a great sportsman, thanks to Eyrymount! an' no bad hand at the bottle. I'm at present on terms wi' Gib Cowper, the horse-jockey, for twa famous hunters, as guid, I think, as Springall. They're baith by Bellerophon, real bluids; but he asks twa hundred guineas for them, an' that I think is ower muckle; I offered him a hunder and ninety."

"Where are they to be seen?" inquired Græme.

"I dinna ken," replied Nashon. "He brought them to Outfieldhaugh; but wadna leave them in my stable till we bargained. He said he would ca' again. I hae been offered Lord Luxmore's pack, too, at four hunder guineas, fifty head, that is about four guineas a dog—owre muckle, dinna ye think, Eyrymount?"

"I don't think so," said Eyrymount—"I'll run halves with you."

"I'll consider o't," said Nashon. "His lordship said he wad see me again. We'll better no seem owre anxious—we may mak a better bargain, especially as they say he needs money."

"Is it possible," whispered Hawthorn to Eyrymount, "that the borrower of my old boots has any serious intention of keeping a pack?"

"I do not doubt it," replied Eyrymount.

"Poor simpleton!" said Dione to herself, with a sigh, as she looked on the ruddy cheeks and open countenance of her grotesquely dressed lover—"has he fallen into the very snare I unwittingly pointed out to him?"

"You are the most spirited laird that Outfieldhaugh ever saw, Mr Heatherton," said Madame Græme. "It is a great pleasure to have a neighbour like you alongside of us."

"An' I'm as weel pleased wi' the high-spirited Eyrymount," said Nashon—"we'll dash away nicely thegither."

"Saw you ever such a fool, Miss Græme?" whispered Benjamin. "He will soon dash through Outfieldhaugh. If he had ploughed the salt seas, and endured the blisters of a tropical sun for his money, as I have done, he would know better how to guide it."

Dione intuitively turned her face from the orange-coloured Indian towards the rose-coloured youth, and sighed.

"Are you to be present at the steeple-chase on the 19th?" said Eyrymount to Nashon.

"Surely," replied he, readily, "I canna resist a steeple-chase. I ken nae sport like that mixture o' rinnin, louping, manœuvring, jockeyin, tumblin, an' brak-neck feats o' horsemanship. It's right glorious. If life had naething better to offer us, as a reward, for a' we are doomed to suffer between the cradle and the grave, a guid steeple-chase wad be aneugh to mak us a' wish to live our lives owre again. What are the rules?—will Springall be admitted?"

"No; he is beyond the age," replied Græme, "but Hawthorn will sell ye Copperbottom."

"Weel, I'll ca' the morn an' see Copper," said Nashon. "If I buy, I'll ride him mysel—I'll trust nae jockey. If I win I'll gie the gentlemen o' the Soho Club a chance for the prize again by anither steeple-chase, the day after the next county races, whereat, by-the-by, I wad like to hae a sweat for the gowd cup, as a guid way o' bringin a person into notice, especially whar ane is his ain jockey, as I wad be, wearin a green silk jacket as livery. Hoo gran' it wad be to hear the leddies cryin, 'Success to the green!'—bettin their gowd pins on his comin up in guid time to the winnin post, and then shakin hands wi' the victor, wi' a thousand gratulations on his success!"

"Do my ears deceive me," said Dione to herself, "as my eyes seemed to do when I saw the piebald character of his dress? How powerful is pride, when it is stimulated in the hidden recesses of the mind of the peasant, by the magic wand of fortune! Alas! alas! my choice is now between a foolish beggar and a heartless nabob."

The effect produced by Nashon on the whole company assembled at Eyrymount was extraordinary. The master and mistress were delighted with him, and devoted him in their imaginations, to a speedy immolation on the altar of the god of folly ; the members of the Soho Club already marked him out as a good pigeon, whose tail-feathers would enable them to fly yet a little longer in the high regions of fashion , Dione sighed for a lost lover and ruined simpleton; and Benjamin Rice counted, in his imagination, his guineas, and congratulated himself on a gout that prevented him from engaging in sports that might tend to dissipate them, along with the remnant of a ruined constitution, which sack, and sago pudding, and panado, could scarcely support.

Nashon bought Copperbottom, ran him, carried the prize, and sold him next day for ten pounds of profit; on which great occasion he informed his housekeeper, Esther Maclean, that he intended to entertain the whole Soho Club at Outfieldhaugh—a communication that produced a mixed feeling of terror and wonder on the part of the old housekeeper, which she had no words adequately to express. She wished him to be genteel, and like the other gentlemen of the neighbourhood; but she had heard hints that he was getting fast into the vortex of a sportsman's dissipation; and the intelligence that he was to entertain the "Soho"—equal, in her estimation, to dining the Cham of Tartary and his staff—confirmed the report, and filled her with sorrow and regret. All her efforts to dissuade her master from his purpose were unavailing : cards were issued to forty gentlemen; the question put by Esther, where he was to find the necessary service of table apparatus, the wine, the cooks, and the waiters, required to be answered ; and he was at no loss for an answer on a subject he had deeply considered. Mounting Springall, he hastened away to a town at some considerable distance, and procured an estimate from an innkeeper of the expense of his projected entertainment. The innkeeper undertook to supply everything, with livery servants, unknown to the company, and keep his engagement a profound secret, for so much a-head. The entertainment went off in great style; Nashon presided, with all the manners of a thorough-bred blood sportsman—drank, sang, and talked of races and steeple-chases, with all the slang and spirit of the craft. The wine, the plate, the service, the servants in livery, and all the appurtenances of a great establishment, apparently belonging to the merry master of the revels, were of the best kind, and produced universal admiration. The spirit and bounty of Nashon were extolled to the utmost, and Squire Hawthorn admitted, in a whisper to Græme, that the loan of the boots had been amply repaid. Nashon again drank them all out. The extent of the potations made no change on the expense, and a folly that was never to be repeated might be carried with impunity to the confines of madness.

Next morning, after encountering the lugubrious face of Esther Maclean, who saw in the hired servants and the broken dishes and glasses all the worst symptoms of approaching ruin, Nashon went out to enjoy the refreshing breezes that swept along the Well Burn; and, at her beloved spot, the Monks' Well, he found Dione Græme sitting, wrapped in meditation.

"Do I see," said Dione, as he approached her, "the same individual I met on this spot on a former occasion, when I thought his unpolished prudence and good sense would have enabled him to profit by a disclosure I made without intention."

"The very same—Nashon Heatherton," replied he, "wi' nae change in him, except it be that he is, if possible, still mair prudent and far wiser than he was on that eventfu day."

"I know you are a riddle, sir," said Dione—"a charade I cannot solve. Do not the neighbours say, what I have partially witnessed, that you are inebriated with the spirit of the fox-hunter, and fast riding to ruin, at the nod and by the example of my father, who, however, is making his folly subservient to his purpose of ruining you?"

"A' true, my bonny Dione," replied Nashon. "Naebody can be blamed for sayin what I wish him to think. They say, and you suppose, that I am ridin to the deevil; but will ye believe me when I tell you that I am only ridin to *you?* If you'll tak me as I stand, and marry me in spite o' your faither an' mither, I'll gie up my mad pranks, and sit quietly down, as a douce, sensible man, whase greatest ambition and highest pleasure would be to minister to the comfort and happiness o' Dione Græme."

"My father and mother will never consent to that," replied Dione. "It was only this morning that my mother urged me to receive more kindly, or rather less unkindly, the addresses of Benjamin Rice; but how can it be that your behaving as a fool can ever come in place of the consent of my parents, or procure me for your wife, even if I were favourably affected towards you?"

"If you will tell me that you love me and will become my wife, provided I get your faither and mither's consent to our union," replied Nashon, "I will tell you the wisdom o' my folly, an' explain my riddle—that, in place o' ridin to the deevil, I am ridin to Dione."

"I must believe the evidence of my senses," replied Dione. "I have already given you reason to suppose that I was well affected towards you; but, if Benjamin Rice has disgusted me, Nashon Heatherton has terrified me; and I must first see an amendment of your conduct before I pledge myself to what may be my ruin."

"Time tries whinstanes, Dione," replied Nashon; "an' my folly is no quite sae hardened an' perverse. If ye gang sae muckle by the evidence o' yer senses, I hae nae objection to mak them the test o' my conduct, when a' its pairts are seen thegither, an' my motives for actin as I now do can be properly understood. Will ye be kind to me, Dione, till I prove myself the same prudent Nashon Heatherton you first thought me?"

"Most certainly," replied Dione; "for it is my wish to respect you and"——

"Love you," said Nashon, making out her sentences. "Dione Græme, if ye wad only repeat, wi' thae bonny lips, the words I hae now uttered, I wad soon change the wish into the thing wished for; an', what is mair, I wad mak your love the handmaiden o' your respect, whilk, being an act o' the judgment, whase laws are eternal, is mair necessary to the happiness o' a marriage than the love o' the fickle thing they ca' the heart, whilk beats fast and slow wi' the changes o' wind and weather."

"Would that my respect were already equal to my—my—feeling for you!" said Dione, blushing.

"The mair appropriate word ye hae now blinked," said Nashon, "wad hae been mair pleasant to me; but I maun be content wi' your thoughts till I shew mysel mair worthy o' their bein revealed. The morn's the race-day, an' my steeple-chase prize is to be run for the day after. Ye may smile as ye like, but the laugh may yet be on the other side. Ye see how grave I can be when I speak o' serious things. I understand your faither has bought a fine new tandem for the occasion. We gae forward merrily—dashin awa in fine style. Dinna we, Dione?"

"And where it is to end I know not," replied she. "My father, I understand, is merely an extravagant man, who will soon see the end of his fortune; for I have heard he has been already applying to Mr Langbane, the rich laird of Conybarns, for a loan of money; but, as for you, there is a mystery about your extravagance which I cannot penetrate—though this much I can easily understand, that he who trusts himself upon a stormy sea in an open boat, may miscalculate the power of his own resources in saving him from a watery grave."

Nashon laughed at the fears of Dione, and, before they parted, assumed the boldness of sealing the protestations of his affection, and the sincerity of his views of ultimate prudence and amendment, by a kiss, which, though it produced a blush extending from bandeau to tucker, was, in the end, forgiven with such a sweetness of expression and so modest a demeanour, that a stoic could not have resisted the impulse which stimulated the thief to a repetition of the petty larceny.

Nashon's subsequent proceedings were of the same character as those already detailed. He attended the races in a borrowed tandem, without hinting anything concerning the proprietorship of what was presumed to be his own. His generosity in being the contributor of the prize of the next steeple-chase was lauded by all those who got a chance for winning it. Dinners followed at Eyrymount and other places; and Nashon, following in the wake of Græme, though sometimes leading the way, appeared to be fast hurrying to the gulf which awaits the victims of passions whose gratification holds no proportion to the means of supporting a dissolute life. A year passed on, during which a great deal of money was spent by Græme, and not a little by Nashon, whose resources from the funds he got as executor of the proprietor of Outfieldhaugh were, however, more than sufficient for a much greater expenditure. In the midst of this dissipation he was repeatedly attempted to be reclaimed by those who wished him well, and, among others, his old master, Langbane, had many interviews with him, with a view of producing some salutary sense of the imprudence of his conduct.

"I hae warned you," said the old miser, "an' my warnins are nae beetles' sangs i' the auld wa's o' spaein wives. But the truth o' our proverbs works out in spite o' a' the warnins o' Solomon; an I think we hae ane that says, 'Set a beggar on horseback an' he'll ride to the deevil.' I hae seen that verified often i' my day; and anither o' the same kind—'Reek comes aye down again, however high it flees'—is just as pithy and pertinent to your case. I never mak an apology for gi'en a man a guid advice; because, if he taks the poker and drives me out o' his house, he just verifies another guid auld sayin—'He that comes atween a fule and his ruin, is like him wha interferes atween a man an' his wife—he's sure o' the reddin straik.' "

"But ye needna be afraid o' my poker, guid friend,' replied Nashon, laughing. "I tak a' ye hae said in guid part, though I fear ye wadna come sae weel aff at Eyrymount."

"I believe if I wad lend him the three thousand pounds he wants me to advance to him," said Langbane, with a smile, "I might say onything I liked to him."

"An' will ye lend him the money?" inquired Nashon, anxiously.

"I wad rather borrow yours, were it for nae ither object than to keep it for ye," replied Langbane.

"A joke has sometimes mair wisdom in't than the pulpit oration o' a greetin minister," replied Nashon. "I hae nae great confidence i' my power o' keepin thegither the five thousand pounds I hae yet o' my executry; an', if Eyrymount wad tak the loan frae me, I wad tak a mortgage owre Eyrymount as my security; but I hae guid reason to think he winna borrow frae his ain vassal. What wad ye think o' my giein you the siller, an' lettin you lend it him in your name, you giein me an assignation to the debt."

"As your friend, Nashon, an' wishin to keep thegither siller whase wings are fast fledgin, I hae nae objection to your plan," replied Langbane. "I hae only ae remark to mak—Wha is to draw the interest? for, if I assign the debt to ye, I canna tak the interest, an' then it will come out that ye are the creditor."

"Muckle will come and gae afore my interest is due an' payable," replied Nashon. "I hae every faith in ye. Here is a check on my banker for three thousand pounds. Eyrymount, ye ken, pays the expense o' the lawyer's papers."

"Ye're as well up to thae things as I am," replied Langbane. "There's only ae thing ye dinna seem to ken."

"What is that?" inquired Nashon.

"There's a sma commission paid generally to negociators o' lent siller," said the miser. "I'll only charge ye a half per cent."

"Weel, ye'll get it," said Nashon, "after ye work for't. There's nae commission paid aforehand."

"That's true, too," replied Langbane. "Ye'll be a proud man wi' a bond ower Eyrymount."

And Langbane left Nashon, with the view of going direct to Eyrymount, to tell him that he was now willing to lend him the money he required. The transaction was very soon finished. Langbane got a mortgage over the property of Eyrymount, and assigned it over to Nashon, who locked it past in his coffers, along with the title-deeds of his property and the documents of his remaining cash.

After Eyrymount got this large sum, he increased still farther his expenditure; while Nashon, having, to some extent, gained his object, shewed indications of a wish to draw up. Eyrymount noticed this, and appeared displeased, asking Nashon his reason for not joining him in the prosecution of his schemes of pleasure. Nashon replied, that his money was done; an answer which the other apparently expected, and with which he seemed delighted.

"I have an overplus of ready cash just now," he said. "What is the use of money but to purchase with it the pleasures which this life holds out in such profusion to those who are willing to buy? Take a couple of thousands from me, and give me your note of hand for it; a mere piece of form, you are aware, as I never would put it to execution, relying, as I do implicitly, on your honour for repayment."

"What interest wad ye be expectin for't," said Nashon.

"Oh, a bagatelle. Say five per cent.," replied the other.

"Very weel," said Nashon, who knew that Eyrymount was paying himself five per cent. for the same money to Langbane. "I carena though I lighten ye o' the twa thousand; but I see nae source o' repayin't, save frae the flesh an' banes o' Outfieldhaugh."

"Things will have gone far, and many changes been effected in us and our friendships, ere that issue could take place," replied the other, who went to bring the money.

The transaction was instantly closed; the bill was given at a day's date, and seized by Eyrymount, as would have been the titles to Outfieldhaugh, if destined to the library fire, their hereditary enemy. The same course of life was pursued by him, and Nashon still kept up, for a time, the appearance of going through, with all due rapidity, the two thousand pounds he had thus borrowed from his friend. The thousand pounds that had been left in Eyrymount's hands, of the sum he had borrowed from Langbane, was not sufficient to keep him going for any length of time, and application was, therefore, made to the same source for two thousand more. Nashon supplied the cash, which was, in fact, just the two thousand pounds he had got from Eyrymount; and Langbane's mortgage over the Eyrymount estate was assigned to him in the same way as the former.

Having waited until he thought a great part of this second loan was spent, Nashon, who had had, in the meantime, several meetings with Dione, at the Monks' Well, was informed by her, that her father and mother were now begun to press the marriage between her and Benjamin Rice so urgently that she must either consent, or submit to be treated as a rebel to their authority, and an alien from their affections and interests.

"You shall never marry Benjamin Rice," said Nashon.

"And whom shall I marry then?" said the unhappy girl, who had made her communication to him in tears—"a ruined spendthrift, who has borrowed two thousand from my father, and thereby placed himself and his property in the power of one who, as I told you, had originally in his view the seizure of an old part of his estate? Where is all your wisdom now? Alas! how foolish I have been to put any faith in the professions of one who is incapable of avoiding a danger pointed out to his open eyes! To marry Benjamin Rice is misery, if not death—to marry you is wretchedness and shame, besides rebellion against the commands of my parents."

"Calm yersel, Dione," said Nashon. "I shall go instantly and ask your father's consent to our marriage."

"If an objection existed formerly to your procuring that consent," replied Dione, still weeping, "think ye that is removed by your being now in poverty, and my father's debtor?"

"We'll lat alane thae subtle questions, my Dione," said Nashon, "an try our mettle. Your father is my friend. Do we no ride thegither, drink thegither, and laugh thegither? Why should he refuse me his dochter, if he gives me his confidence? He never rides, drinks, or laughs wi' Benjamin Rice. I'll awa to him, an' try him. A faint heart never wan sae fair a lady as Dione Græme."

Nashon accordingly opened the subject to Eyrymount.

"I hae been thinkin o' takin a wife," he began, "to see an' reclaim me, an' keep me frae ruin, and Outfieldhaugh frae the hammer."

"Whom have you in contemplation?" said Eyrymount, fearfully apprehensive that he was after a rich heiress whose fortune would relieve him and his property from difficulties.

"I hae been thinking o' twa or three," replied Nashon. "Conybarns' dochter, ye ken, will be a rich cratur, though she's neither a lily o' the valley nor a rose o' Sharon.'

"She has the king's evil," rejoined Eyrymount, whose objection to this match was apparent.

"I thank ye for the intelligence," replied Nashon. "What say ye to yer ain Dione, provided I could get her consent?"

"My Dione!" cried Eyrymount, in surprise and pride. "Allow me to tell ye, Mr Nashon Heatherton, that I do not intend to marry my daughter to my vassal and my debtor. I am surprised at the confidence that enabled you to propose so ridiculous a project, though I am glad the secret has come out. It has been for this that you have been dashing forth so brilliantly; expecting, no doubt, that, by covering the coarse metal of your original uneducated condition by the tinsel of fashion, you could produce an impression upon the heart of my daughter. Thus you repay me for my kindness in taking you out, introducing you to society, and even filling your pocket with my money, which, by the by, I will now thank you to repay."

"I canna pay you," replied Nashon; "the money is gane —at least I hae nane o't. Ye maun just wait till I save it oot o' the rents o' my property."

"I will do no such thing," said Eyrymount, who thought it was now time to quarrel; "I must have either a mortgage, or an adjudication, which is just a legal mortgage. Take your choice."

"I winna meddle wi't," replied Nashon; "a wilfu man maun hae his way. I think ye should just gie me Dione, an' that wad settle a'; an', besides, it wad bring the twa properties thegither."

"A man that cannot refrain from impertinence, should not trust himself in other people's houses," cried the incensed Eyrymount. "I request your instant departure."

"You'll maybe ca' on me some day sune," said Nashon, quietly, as he took his hat; "I will be happy to see you at Outfieldhaugh."

"You will soon see my deputy, at any rate," said Eyrymount.

"I am much obliged to ye," said Nashon, and retired, with a very low bow.

Eyrymount, who thought his proceedings ripe, instructed his agent to raise an action of adjudication againt Nashon, whereby Outfieldhaugh might be forcibly mortgaged to him, in security of his two thousand pounds. The agent proceeded with all speed to comply with the commands of his client; and, on a subsequent day, a messenger-at-arms called at Outfieldhaugh, accompanied by his witnesses, for the purpose of serving, as it is termed, or, in plainer language, of giving a copy of the summons to the debtor.

"This is what the lawyers ca' an adjudication?" said Nashon.

"Yes," replied the messenger, gruffly.

"Can ae messenger serve twa maisters?" said Nashon.

"Yes," replied the man.

"Weel," said Nashon, "will ye tak a step owre to Eyrymount, an' deliver to the laird o' that property this requisition?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the messenger, taking the paper and reading it. "I see it is a requisition to pay you £5000, contained in two bonds, by Eyrymount, to Murdoch Langbane, and assigned by him to you. It should properly be intimated by a notary, and one of my concurrents has that qualification, though now greatly reduced."

"See that it's legally dune," said Nashon. "My agent, Gilbert Shortpage, drew it up, an' I warrant it correct."

"It shall be done instantly" said the messenger, who filled up the notary's name in the paper, and departed to execute his new and unexpected commission.

At the time the messenger rapped at the gate of Eyry mount, Græme and his lady were occupied in talking about the prospect they now had of seizing upon Outfieldhaugh.

"About this time the ambitious Nashon will be receiving my summons of adjudication," said Græme.

"A much more suitable gift, from his superior, than Dione Græme," said Madam.

"What is this, sir?" said Græme to the messenger, who had just opened the door of the apartment.

"A *requisition*, your honour," replied the messenger.

"From whom?" said Græme.

"Nashon Heatherton," replied the messenger.

"A *requisition* for delay, I fancy," said Græme. "Ha! ha! ha!" He is too late. The law must take its course. Go tell him I cannot comply with it."

"Would not your honour better read it?" said the messenger.

"Oh, the usual cant, I presume," said Græme, opening the paper and glancing over it. "What is this?" he added, letting go the paper, and falling back on his chair.

"What is the matter?" cried Madam, taking up the document, and flying for a smelling-bottle at the same time.

"It is, Madam," said the messenger, while she applied the salts to her husband's nose, "a requisition for payment of £5000, due to Mr Heatherton, as assignee of Mr Langbane."

"Heaven have mercy on us!" cried she, while she continued her efforts to restore her husband.

The messenger and his men departed, and left Eyrymount and his wife to the full anguish of their critical situation.

The news of this proceeding got wind, and reached the ears of Benjamin Rice, who thought it prudent to suspend his visits to Eyrymount. Græme had now the prospect of losing not only Outfieldhaugh, but his own patrimonial estate. What could he do but give Dione to Nashon? This he did. The couple were married; the two properties were afterwards conjoined; and the sportsman of Outfieldhaugh distanced all his competitors.

THE SEA FIGHT.

"Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep
Her march is o'er the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep."
CAMPBELL.

It was on the close of a sultry day in August, about the end of the French war, that a carriage was slowly wending its way down one of the principal streets of the town of Berwick. The dust with which it was covered, and the jaded appearance of the horses, seemed to betoken that it came from a distance. The postilion, a pursy little man, whose rosy face bore the indubitable marks of a worshipper at the shrine of Bacchus, drew up at the first inn which presented itself to view. Out of the carriage stepped a young man who was plainly dressed in the garb of a sailor He had nothing particular about his dress to distinguish him from the common run of seamen; but his upright figure, and that indescribable something which is peculiar to a "certain class," and which serves to distinguish them from those in humbler situations in life, at first sight shewed that he belonged to the former. He appeared to be about twenty-six years of age, while his weather-beaten face, and a slight scar on his left cheek, shewed that he had borne both "the battle and the breeze." He was accompanied by a squat muscular-looking fellow, who seemed to act in the capacity of servant; although his sea jargon and hard horny hands shewed him to be more accustomed to the duty of a sailor than that of a lacquey. After seeing that their baggage was properly taken care of, they retired together to a private room.

"Well, Bill," said he who seemed the superior to his companion, "how do you feel after your ride? For my part, I would sooner sail round the world in a gale of wind, and the ship pitching bows under all the time, than be again jammed up and jostled in that infernal cage."

"Why, sir," rejoined his companion, "I am as sore as if I had been soundly thrashed with a handspike; but, howdsoever, that doesn't matter—we must look out for squalls on land as well as on sea, till we are fairly housed either under ground or in Davy Jones."

"Take my spy-glass," said the young officer, "walk down to the shore, and see if our little hooker is appearing in sight yet."

"As I take it," replied Bill, "she can't be far *astarn* of us, for she has had a spanking breeze all day."

So saying, snatching up his hat, he was preparing to quit the room, when the officer bawled out—

"'Vast there, my lad—I'll accompany you." And they both descended together.

Turning down the arch which leads to the pier, they strolled along till they overtook four or five men who were lounging at that part where the pier turns outward at an obtuse angle. Below them lay a longboat, apparently intended for piloting the ships into the harbour. One of them was a man about sixty years of age, whose small head and piercing eye, slouched under a broad-brimmed hat, were strangely contrasted with the bluff and muscular appearance of his body. His face was covered with a thick shaggy beard, which seemed not to have been in the hands of the barber for a month at least. The rest of the men had nothing remarkable in their appearance; but all of them seemed to be at least twenty years younger than the old fellow just mentioned.

"Well, my lads," said the officer, "any ships in sight?"

"Never a one," replied the old fellow, in a gruff voice; "we may stand here all the day blowing our fingers, and whistling to Molly Jackson, long enough before she send us that windfall."

"Perhaps that windfall may happen sooner than you expect," replied the officer. "I expect a vessel soon; she cannot be far distant."

"Which direction does she come?" eagerly asked the old man. But no sooner were the words out of his mouth than a square-rigged vessel was observed doubling St Abb's, which had before concealed her from their view. In a minute the blue-jack flew up to her foretopmast head.

"There comes the little *Hawk*," cried Bill, rubbing his hands for joy; "there comes the *Hawk*, as tight a little craft as ever fought her guns on one deck."

The sudden appearance of the brig seemed to act like an electric shock upon the men. In an instant, hands were seen disappearing from the flaps of their dirty canvass trousers; and each scrambling down the pier as best he could, seized hold of their respective oars, and, in a moment, the longboat was under way, the men pulling as if it had been for life or death.

"Stop!" cried the officer; "take me on board with you."

"Give way, my hearties," roared out the old man, without attending to him. "Give way—there is Hoby Elliot will be at our heels directly."

"I am commander of that vessel," cried the officer, running along the pier to keep up with the boat; but the men were too eager to get at the vessel to attend to him.

"Well, Bill," said he, turning to his companion, " see it is no go with these fellows; so you will just step up to the inn, get our luggage down, and here is some money to discharge our reckoning."

"Ay, ay, sir," said Bill, and moved off.

The brig, by this time, had neared the harbour considerably with the wind, from the north-north-west, blowing right upon her quarter. The young officer could not help a feeling of pride and satisfaction as he fondly gazed upon his little vessel scudding before the breeze, while her taut masts and long, slight yards, literally covered with canvass, seemed to bend beneath their load. There is a sympathy which the sailor feels for his ship, which it is difficult to describe. It is not that love which a parent feels for his child—nor yet the love of a child to its parent; it is not that which a brother feels for his sister. No; it is something stronger than this: it is the affection which an ardent lover feels for his mistress—it is a love *riveted* by the strongest links of attachment; in it he has weathered many a tough gale; in it are contained his jovial shipmates, bound together by mutual hardships and perils.

The prospect which at this moment presented itself to the officer's view was beautiful in the extreme. To the south, beyond the long, flat sands of Holy Island, were seen the old castle and abbey of Lindisfern, hallowed by so many sacred associations; beyond them, were seen rising, in the distance, the castles of Bamburgh and Dunstanburg; to the west, were the fields yellow with corn ready for the sickle; to the north, was the bold promontory of St Abb's, the finest headland in Europe, jutting into the sea; to the east, was the German Ocean, stretching away till the view was bounded by the clouds in the distant horizon, which seemed level with the sea; and, what to the officer was dearer than all these, there was his little vessel, the pride of his heart, skimming, like a thing of life, over the blue waters.

Before proceeding farther with our present story, it may not be amiss, first, to give the reader some insight into the history of the hero of our tale.

Harry Fenwick was the son of a small landed proprietor in the south-west of England, who, having unfortunately embarked his whole fortune in a mercantile speculation, was, by a sudden loss, reduced to poverty. The distress occasioned by this misfortune was increased by the sudden death of his wife, which so preyed upon his spirits that he soon after died of a broken heart, leaving poor Harry and his little sister Susan unprotected in the world. But Providence, who watches over the orphan and the destitute, soon raised them up a protector in the person of a maternal uncle, who, having been abroad for a number of years, had amassed a handsome fortune, but arrived in England too late to close the eyes of his sister. Having no children, he determined to adopt his nephew and niece, who, from that day, became as his own. Harry was fourteen years old on the death of his parents; and his uncle, Benjamin Davis, determined to bring him up to his own profession—that of a sailor. He was accordingly entered as a midshipman on board the *Ranger*, a fifty-gun ship, where his conduct was such, that he rose from one degree to another, till, at length, in an engagement with a ship of superior metal, he so distinguished himself, that, in reward for his bravery, he was promoted to the command of the brig *Hawk*, mounting eight twelves and two short carronades, with a crew of eighty hands, as smart fellows as ever sailed on salt water. At the time when our story begins, Harry had left his ship at Leith, to visit an old friend of his uncle's, at whose house he was a frequent visiter. Certain it is, that however much Harry loved the yarns and company of the old tar, yet there was another no less powerful attraction, in the person of his gentle and lovely daughter Maria. Maria Everet was not what most people would call a beauty; but the grace and symmetry of her slight figure, her sweet, pensive manners, and the melodiousness of her voice, threw around her a charm which captivated much more effectually than those whose beauty dazzles at first sight.

Often would Maria listen, in silent wonder and admiration, to the conversations between her father and Harry, of hairbreadth escapes, of storms and battles; and, stealing a timid glance at the young and hardy sailor, she would sigh, and, like Desdemona, would desire him to repeat again what he had been relating. Harry, on the other hand, felt interested in the lovely girl. At first he esteemed her for her father's sake, but a better acquaintance made him love her for her own; and it was with secret joy and inward gratification that the old father observed the growing attachment between Harry and his daughter. Often would Harry, when cruising on the coast, think of the peaceful home of the old sailor, where dwelt she whom he loved above all the world; and, however far absent, his thoughts, like the needle in his compass, always reverted to the north. Great, then, was his disappointment, when, on arriving at Everet's house, he found that Maria had gone to England to visit his uncle Ben and sister Susan. Without stopping longer than to take a night's rest, he set out for Berwick, where his ship was to wait till his arrival; and, as he was bound for Plymouth, after an eighteen months' cruise, he determined to call on his uncle, who dwelt on the sea coast. But to return to our story.

By the time the vessel had reached the mouth of the harbour, our old friend, Bill Curtis, was hurrying along the pier, blowing like a porpoise, and bawling out to the porter who accompanied him—

"Come, bear a hand, my lad—I see they are just manning the six-oared gig!"

On the approach of the gig, Harry leaped down to the landing-place, and stepped on board. In a moment, the caps of the sailors were doffed in salutation to their commander; and a smile of pleasure lighted up their weather-beaten countenances as he addressed them in a kindly manner.

Harry was received on the quarter by his first and second lieutenants; when the sailors, no longer restrained by the presence of their commander, and bursting with impatience, asked all at once—

"Well, Bill, what's brought the captain and you so soon back?—has the bird flown?"

"Avast a bit," cried Bill—"I must first fill up a hole in my stomach, big enough to hold a hogshead." So, bursting past, he descended the companion-ladder, and straightway betook himself to the galley, where the cook, an old tar who had got his larboard fin carried away by a cannon ball, was serving, out of a monstrous ladle, a mess of beef and greens to the old pilot and his boat's crew, who were already devouring with their eyes the promised feast—"Shiver my tafferel, if I don't think I could swallow a shark, bones and all, for sheer hunger!" roared Bill. So saying, he slapped his knife into the beef, and ate as heartily as if he had not tasted meat for a week.

At this instant, the boatswain's whistle was heard piping up all hands.

"What's the matter now?" said the cook.

"Oh," said Bill, "they are going to get the ship under way, I suppose."

"The ship under way!" said the old pilot, rising from a dark corner where he was sitting. "Is the captain not going to enter the harbour?"

"No, no," replied Bill; "he is in too great a hurry to see his sweetheart for that."

"Where is she?" asked the old cook.

"On the coast of Norfolk," said Bill, "where we are to stop on our passage. But I must not stand speechifying here while the rest are busy."

So saying, he sprung on deck, followed by the old pilot.

When Bill and his companion came upon deck, they found Harry there, giving orders. The old pilot went up to him, and doffing his hat, said—

"Sir, I hope you are not going to get the ship under way to-night."

"Why not?" asked Harry.

"Look, sir," exclaimed the pilot, turning to the north-east, "do you not see how the sky is lowering over yonder? and do you not feel what a roll of the sea there is?—a sure sign of a coming storm, if there has not been a gale before. Take an old man's advice for once, and one who has weathered many a tough gale—keep not to sea to-night, but enter the harbour, where you will be safe from every wind that blows."

"Thank you, my old boy," said Harry; "but a seaman must not be frightened with every capful of wind that may blow." So saying, he moved off to give directions.

By this time the ship was again under way; but, although Harry had disregarded the advice of the old pilot about entering the harbour, yet he determined to make the ship snug for what might happen. So, seizing a speaking-trumpet, he bawled out to some men aloft—

"Send down the royals and topgallantmasts there."

"Ay, ay, sir," shouted half a dozen voices from the clouds; and in a minute down they came.

Harry, coming up to Archer, the second lieutenant, asked him what he thought of the weather.

"I believe we are going to get a stiff north-easter," replied Archer; "and, by the *Lord Harry*, there it comes!" said he, pointing to the east.

"Well, then," said Harry, "get the topsails double-reefed, new lash the guns, and send the carpenter and his mate to secure the boats and batten down the hatchways. What course do you steer?" asked Harry at the man at the wheel.

"South-east and by south," said the man.

"Then keep her head two more points to the east; we must stand without the Fern Islands, as the wind seems inclined to eastern upon us."

At this instant, a heavy squall struck the ship, and almost laid her on her beam-ends. "Luff, my lad—luff!" roared out Harry to the man at the wheel.

Seeing the ship much pressed, a midshipman with six men, were sent to take in the staysails, by which the ship was eased considerably. The wind, by this time, had risen to a perfect hurricane; the rain fell in torrents, and the sea-birds were screaming and fluttering about the rigging, as if seeking for shelter from the wind; the sea, likewise, had risen prodigiously, and the ship, groaning and weltering at every plunge, seemed to be cracking at every timber, whilst the creaking of the guns and the rattling of the blocks greatly increased the uproar and confusion.

"Surely some hag is dead to-night, it blows so desperately," said Clark, coming aft to where Harry was standing; "but, as the ship makes good weather on this reach, as she is nearly bow on to the sea, it may be as well to keep her on this tack during the night."

"O sirs," said the carpenter, coming up with a face as long as his arm, "the ship is sinking, and we shall all go to the bottom."

"What's the matter?" said Harry.

"The ship has sprung a leak in the powder-magazine, and the water is pouring in like a sluice."

"Hang your long phiz!" said an old grim fellow of a quartermaster, standing by the main-chains; "why don't you go and stop it, then?"

"Do you, Clark," said Harry, "go down and see what is the matter; and do you, carpenter, get your crew and man the weather pump."

"There is a leak, indeed," said Clark, returning; "but nothing to make a work about."

"An ugly sea that!" said the old quartermaster; "that greenhorn at the helm has wet me into the skin. You rascal, why don't you ease the ship into the sea? If you carry on in that manner, you will soon send us all to another place of worship."

"Do you intend, sir," said he, addressing himself to Harry, "to stand long on this tack?"

"Yes," replied Harry; "the ship will labour less on this tack than on the other; and besides, it is best to get as much sea-room as possible."

"Had we not better run into the Fairway?" said the quartermaster; "we are sure of getting shelter under the Big Fern; and I know the coast well, for I was brought up in these parts."

"That's a good idea," observed Harry.

"But a lee-shore is a dangerous place in a stormy night," added Clark.

"Oh, never fear the lee-shore—I'll pilot you in safety; besides, the lights will direct us."

"Very well," said Harry; "as the wind does not at all seem inclined to take off, we had better do as you say; and do you, Clark, take some men and clew up the foresail. Keep her away, my lad," shouted he to the man at the wheel. "So, so—steady. Ready there with the boom-foresail halyards."

"All ready, sir."

"Then boom away, my lads; get the trysail down too, and we'll run under double-reefed topsails alone."

The ship was much eased by this diminution of canvass, and ran much steadier than might have been expected, only occasionally shipping a little sea over the weather bow.

"A bit of a gale," muttered the quartermaster to himself, as he descended to the midshipman's mess. "Humph," said he, observing the middies seated over a bowl of punch. "you seem to be enjoying yourselves upon the strength of it."

"Ay, and would have you to do the same," exclaimed a little mid, pushing him a glass of grog; "come douse your sou'-wester and join us."

Little invitation was needed on the part of the quartermaster, who was one of those characters so emphatically termed, by seamen, "*wet lads*," and who, perhaps, very philosophically reason, that, as they are exposed to so much fluid of a cold nature without, so a proportionable degree of fluid of a hot nature within, is necessary to preserve their equilibrium.

Notwithstanding this frailty, there was not a braver nor a kinder heart in the British navy than that of the old quartermaster. The middies he called his children; and they, in turn, were accustomed to call him Daddy, although some of the tricks which they played him savoured of anything but the respect which children owe to their parents. Having fallen asleep in the midst of a song, with his pipe in the one hand, and his glass in the other, this was too good an opportunity for a lark to be slipped. As his head had fallen back upon his seat, the middies slyly tied a cracker to his pigtail, and were preparing to ignite it, when the quartermaster suddenly awoke, and perceiving the trick they were about to play him, he seized hold of a rope's-end and soon made the middies seek shelter from his fury under the table, where, being unable to get at them, he sung out—

"Blow me, but you small craft have got into too shoal water for me to follow you now; but if I get my big guns to bear upon you, I will blow you out of the water."

A sailor at this moment entering to tell the quartermaster that he was required on deck, put an end to the joke, and relieved the midshipmen from their confinement.

When the quartermaster came on deck, the Fern lights were right a-head; and, by his directions, the vessel was soon moored under the lee of the island, in safety from the tempest. Here, after stopping two days, they again set sail, and had already got off the coast of Norfolk, when, in the grey of the morning, a man at the mast-head called out—

"On deck there, ahoy!"

"Well, my lad?" cried Archer, whose watch it was on deck.

"A large ship with French colours, on the weather bow."

"Call up the captain and first lieutenant," said Archer to a midshipman.

"Mast-head again, ahoy!—what more do you make of her?"

"She looms large, and seems coming down upon us right before the wind."

Harry and Clark now came upon deck, followed by the old quartermaster, who, rubbing his eyes, exclaimed—

"Why what's the matter now?"

Archer pointed out the vessel, which was still at a great distance, but evidently nearing them.

"All hands upon deck there!" shouted Harry; "boatswain, pipe up all hands; and do you, Clark, go up aloft and see what you can make of her."

"She is a large vessel," exclaimed Clark, looking through his spy-glass, "with French colours and ship rig. There, I see her side—all black, and white ports; there is one, two, three—I cannot count them, they are so thick."

"Ay, let her come," cried Harry—"I warrant her she gets as good as she brings. Up with the British ensign, my lads, and let the Frenchman see what we are."

"And I'll take good care that it shall not come down in a hurry, with your honour's leave," exclaimed the old quartermaster. So saying, he mounted the rigging, and nailed the ensign to the mast. "Now, Mr Frenchman, when that comes down, we'll strike, but not till then."

All hands were now on deck, and straining their eyes with looking at the strange sail."

"Get the ship clear for action," roared out Harry; "run out the guns there; pull down the studding-sails. Port!" to the man at the helm. "So."

The deck of the brig at this moment presented a most interesting sight—all hands as busy as possible making arrangements for the engagement. Powder-boxes, sponges, and buckets were strewed along the deck—while some were loading the guns, others securing the boats along the booms, and all in high glee at the thoughts of having a peppering match at the Frenchman. The brig was soon cleared, with the guns loaded and double-shotted on both sides, and every man at his post stripped to his shirt.

There is perhaps no scene more awfully solemn than that which is presented by a ship going into action. The utmost stillness everywhere prevails, only occasionally broken by the commands of the officers, delivered in a suppressed tone, or the whispers of the sailors delivering to each other little commissions to their wives or relations, if any of them should fall in battle. 'Tis then that the sailor's heart beats high with hope and expectation, mingled with that undefined emotion of anxiety and dread which the approach of danger always excites. But let the action once begin, and let him hear the guns thundering over his head —'tis then that the sailor forgets his hopes and his fears in his ardour for the conflict. But to return. The breeze had now freshened; and the Frenchman, scudding before it under a press of sail, was now almost within gunshot.

"Hang your impudence, you French lubber!" mumbled the old quartermaster to himself, as he paced up and down the deck with a quick unsteady pace—"do you think to run our little vessel under water? But, big as you are, Mr Monsieur, if the little *Hawk* does not make you sheer off as if you had run foul of a lee-shore, my name is not Jack Scroggins."

The Frenchman seemed inclined to confirm the opinion of the old tar; for on he came, without altering his course, till, on coming within hail of the brig, he bawled out—

"Pull down your colours and bring to, or else I'll sink you."

"Keep your ship away, then," shouted Harry, "that I may bring her alongside."

The Frenchman accordingly did so; but passed so near as almost to carry away the brig's toppinglift.

"Now, luff my lad, and fire away, my hearties!" shouted Harry, whilst the brig shot up to the wind, and a broadside, accompanied with three hearty cheers, told the success of the skilful manœuvre.

The Frenchman was now left far behind, when she and the brig stayed almost at the same instant—the Frenchman to get at the brig, and the brig to get her other broadside to bear upon the Frenchman. The brig was worked to perfection, and came round in fine style. Not so, however, with the Frenchman; for the sudden broadside of the brig had put him in such confusion that, when staying his ship, he had forgot to loose the lee yard-arm of the foresail, by which the vessel hung in the wind, and finally missed stays. Up once more came the little *Hawk*, and saluted him with another broadside, which increased the confusion of the Frenchman; but, being now on the same tack with the brig, he soon came up with her, when bringing his whole broadside to bear upon the *Hawk*, he poured in such a tremendous volley as to threaten entire dissolution to the frame of the little vessel.

The guns of the contending vessels had now roused the inhabitants of the seacoast, and, by this time, the shore was lined with spectators, who were watching the engagement with intense anxiety. Amongst these, was no less a personage than Harry's uncle, Benjamin Davis, with whom Maria was at that time staying. The old tar, as was his constant practice, was taking his morning walk along the beach, with his spy-glass in his hand, and he had witnessed the engagement from the beginning; and there he was, giving orders, as if he had been on board the vessel.

The brig was, at this moment, passing close under the stern of the Frenchman.

"Now, give it home, my lads," shouted old Ben on the shore; and, as if in obedience to his command, the brig opened her guns, one after the other, upon the Frenchman, as she passed, which raked him fore and aft, and did much execution.

The Frenchman, however, was not long behind; for, keeping his ship away, he soon came up to the brig; when, opening upon her another broadside, he would inevitably have sent the little vessel to the bottom, had not the steersman, by a dexterous movement of the helm, avoided part of the shock. The shot took effect principally upon the stern of the brig, tore away the quarter-boards, killed the man at the helm and three other men standing near.

As soon as the smoke cleared away, the people on the shore were dismayed to find the little brig sheering off right before the wind, but still keeping up a running-fire with her stern chasers, at the Frenchman, who was pursuing her under a press of canvass.

"Curse upon you, for a cowardly rascal, who ever you are, to run away from a Frenchman!" shouted out old Ben on the shore, whilst the sweat trickled down in large drops from his forehead. But both he and the Frenchman were mistaken, in thinking that the brig was endeavouring to get off; for this was only a feint on the part of Harry, who, finding that the enemy was so much superior in his weight of metal, saw that his only chance was in close quarters, when he trusted the bravery of his tars would prove victorious over the number of the French. Calling, therefore, all his men on the quarter-deck, he told them that their only chance of victory lay in close quarters.

"Are you ready, my brave fellows," he added, "to follow your commander to the Frenchman's deck? They are three to one of us; but you know what the intrepidity of a handful of British seamen can achieve."

Three cheers followed these words, which were heard by the people on the shore; and, ignorant of the cause, they anxiously awaited the result.

"Get the boarding pikes ready there!" shouted Harry: "and every man arm himself with a cutlass and brace of pistols; and when the Frenchman comes up, lash her to us, and then to it, yard-arm and yard-arm."

"All ready, sir," shouted the men—"all ready."

The Frenchman was now again up to the brig, which she already considered as her prize, when suddenly the *Hawk* tacked right athwart her bows, and in a moment was lashed alongside.

"Ay, that is something like," cried Ben, rubbing his hands for joy—"oh, that I was on board of you, to lend you a helping hand!"

"Hurrah, my hearties! and old England for ever!" shouted Harry, springing on the Frenchman's deck, followed by thirty of his crew.

"Old England for ever!" shouted his men, rushing after him, like so many hungry tigers.

The scene which followed was terrific, each party fighting like furies, and disputing inch for inch—the deck swimming with blood. Two fellows set upon Harry at once. One of these, the lieutenant of the Frenchman, he quickly dispatched with a shot from his pistol; but the other, a strong thick-set seaman, with a black bushy beard, was just firing his musket at his head, when a tremendous thwack from a cutlass behind, severed the stock in pieces, and the next moment the weapon was sheathed in the Frenchman's breast. Harry, on turning round to observe his deliverer, recognised in him our old friend, Bill Curtis, who, covered with blood and powder, and wounded as he was, was again in the thickest of the fray, dealing death at every blow. There was no time for congratulation, however, for the enemy was pressing them on every side; for, although Harry had been nobly supported by Clark and Archer, with thirty more men, yet the enemy had, by their numbers, hemmed them in on every side, and would soon have cut them all to pieces, had not an unexpected attack from behind suddenly changed the fortunes of the day. This was no other than the old quartermaster, who had been left in charge of the brig, with the remainder of the crew, with strict injunctions not to leave her, happen what might. He had, accordingly, for some time, impatiently looked on the struggle, when, no longer bearing to remain inactive, he sung out that the ship might go to the devil, but he would be hanged if he would stand still any longer and see his shipmates cut to pieces by lubberly Frenchmen. So saying, he jumped upon the Frenchman's deck, followed by the rest of the crew, who were all as eager as himself; and so sudden and furious was the attack, that the Frenchmen, quite dispirited by this unexpected assault, were glad to seek shelter from their fury, some in the rigging, others down the hold, while those who remained were fain to cry for quarter, which was readily given them. The men in the rigging had fled to the tops for shelter, but, seeing their comrades obtain quarter, they also surrendered themselves at discretion. The next minute the British ensign was waving proudly in the breeze at the topmast of the Frenchman, and three long and hearty cheers, which were responded to by the people on the shore, told the success of the engagement.

The loss on both sides was great, though that of the French greatly exceeded that of the British. Harry, fearing that the French might take it in their heads to set upon him again, as they were still so much superior in number, ordered them below, and battened down the hatches upon them all, except the surgeon and his mate, whom he kept to assist his own in dressing the wounds of the men. On looking amongst the slain of his crew, Harry observed amongst them the stiffened corpse of poor Bill Curtis. Harry could not help shedding a tear to the memory of this brave fellow, who had so nobly seconded him in the time of need. Bill was covered with gore; but an air of defiance was still seated upon his countenance, and his hand still firmly grasped his cutlass, which had that day been wielded with so much success against the enemies of his country. The old quartermaster came up at this moment, and Harry, shaking him by the hand, said to him, "I believe we must have you tried by court-martial, for disobedience of orders. However," he added, more seriously, "I believe, had it not been for your disobedience of orders, we should have all been in the state of that poor fellow," pointing to Bill.

"Ay," said the old quartermaster with a sigh, "a braver fellow never stepped in a black leather shoe. However, it's a road we must travel once; and where die better than fighting for one's country? For my part, I would sooner die on a ship's deck, with the thunder of the cannon sounding in my ears, than on a bed of the finest down."

The people on the shore, seeing that the danger was over, and that the British had gained the victory, had now manned several boats, and were approaching the ships. In the foremost of these was old Ben, who, being the proprietor of the village in which he lived, took upon himself, on all expeditions by sea, the office of commodore of the fleet.

"A noble fellow the captain of that there little craft," exclaimed Ben, as he approached the *Hawk*; "he deserves to be made an admiral, whoever he is. Gracious Heaven, there is my own nephew, Harry!" cried he, springing up the fore chains.

"My own uncle, Ben!" exclaimed Harry, springing forward to embrace him. Cordial, indeed, was the meeting of the uncle and nephew; and perhaps it were difficult to tell which was the greater—the joy of the nephew, or the pride of the uncle.

"But you are all blood, Harry," said the uncle—"you must be wounded."

"A mere scratch," said Harry; "but some of my poor fellows have suffered; but, as the wind favours, we had better get the vessels into the harbour."

The news of the engagement had spread like wildfire through the country; and, as the vessels approached the harbour, crowds of people were waiting to cheer the gallant fellows who had fought so nobly. The wounded were immediately conveyed on shore and distributed among the inhabitants, who were eagerly striving which should receive them; whilst those who had fallen, both French and English, were decently interred, side by side, in that narrow house where all feuds and animosities are buried in oblivion.

The rest of our story is soon told. Harry, soon after the engagement, was united to Maria, with the consent of all parties. For some time after his marriage, he still went to sea; but, on the decease of Maria's father, his property devolving upon him, he retired to enjoy the society of his amiable wife, and that domestic repose to which his toils and labours so well entitled him. Clark, the first lieutenant, having fallen in battle, on Harry's giving up the service, Archer was promoted to the command of the *Hawk*, and he soon after married Susan, Harry's sister. As for the old quartermaster, who had borne so distinguished a part in the engagement, he was at last prevailed upon by Harry to take up his abode in a beautiful cottage upon his estate. A clear stream runs by the cottage door, and the situation commands a fine view of the sea; and the old man may still frequently be seen sitting at his cottage door, on a summer evening, enjoying the beauties of the scene; or, if you rise seon enough, you may perhaps see him taking his morning walk along the beach, with his spy-glass in his hand. His chief delight, however, is in Harry's house, where he is quite at home. He is particularly attached to Harry's children, who are his inseparable companions; and the old man may frequently be seen with one on each knee recounting to them the exploits of his former days, some of which we may, at some future period, communicate to the reader.

As for the French prisoners, a peace with England soon put a period to their captivity; but, when their release came, so much had the people of the place endeared themselves to them by their kindness, that many of them resolved to marry and settle in the neighbourhood. And to this day may still be seen, in the village of C——, some remnants of the victory of the *Hawk*.

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